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NEW YEAR'S REFLECTIONS.

BY THE EDITOR.

THERE are times when our thoughts are naturally taken back into the past. At the close of the year, we go back through its various experiences and dwell thoughtfully upon them before we give them up to be numbered with the years before the flood. And as we are crossing the threshold which separates us from a new year, we naturally look forward to the possible and probable contingencies which will come with it. It is well for us thus to meditate upon the past and to anticipate the future.

But, after all, our duties lie in the present hour, and he who always turns the present moment to the highest uses is the one who lives most wisely. Wisdom from past experience is a great help. The prophetic insight which reaches on into the future and relieves the hardships of the present by visions of grander works, higher experiences, and nobler triumphs in times to come, may give us strength, elevation

of purpose and new courage amid the cares and perplexities of the passing day.

Our object here is to speak of the present. As we advance from the old to the new year we are not to encumber ourselves too much with the past. We are not to be propelled by recollections of the past so much as drawn on by the duties and joys of the present.

The past events on which we are most likely to dwell to our hurt are, great successes which may elate and puff us up, great sorrows which when viewed solely as past events, may shroud us in gloom and enfeeble our energies, or great disappointments, which when brooded over make us misanthropical and unhappy. Besides these there are great mistakes which cannot now be remedied, sins of which the best use we can make is to repent of them and forsake them, casting them as far as possible out of our thoughts, or old forbidden pleasures which we long for as did the wife of Lot for the voluptuous enjoyments of the wicked city on which the fires of a divine retribution were then descending. Or there may come up from the past visions of earthly joy or eminence, thoughts of domestic felicity or intellectual advancement, which still have a strong hold on our affections though long since they have ceased to awaken a single cheering hope in our breasts. Now the best thing we can do is to leave all these matters as objects of memory, entirely behind us, and go on in whatever path of joy, duty, or personal improvement the Providence of God may open before us. To dwell very much on the past creates either an unreasonable vanity or a morbid disaffection with ourselves. In either case it vitiates the taste, enfeebles the character, and almost always leads to a sickly, absorbing egotism. And nothing more effectually dwarfs the man than to have his thoughts wholly taken up with his past self, whether it assume the form of vanity or of self-reproach.

But is the past, then, to become nothing to us? Must we leave it all behind? Certainly not. Whatever it contained of life must be transmuted into our lives, and carried on a living part of ourselves. Only we must not encumber our-

selves with the dead forms so attractive once, but out of which the life now has all departed. The vegetation of the last season is not to be treasured up and carefully preserved to adorn the fields again, but rather left to rot, that whatever of nutriment there is in it may go to enrich the ground so as to spring up in new forms of life. It is better to breathe the fresh air that fans the grave, and love the flowers that grow from the mould enriched by the precious dust below, than to dwell in the charnel-house with the bodies of dear ones, though embalmed with all the sweetness of the old Egyptian art. And better than either, to carry in us the life to which dear friends have helped us, and to carry them — not as a dead weight, but as objects of living interest and affection, a living presence, a vital part of our daily joy and being as much so as those who are visibly our companions. There is no alchemy like that of a devout spirit, — transmuting all that was lovely and precious from the past into the thought and life of the present hour. If we use the present as we ought, it is constantly imparting to us, like the food we eat, that of its essence, which is most readily assimilated to us. If our hearts are warm and generous, the warm and generous affections of our friends find their way into our souls, and live on with us when they are dead. And if we are not only generous and affectionate, but also devout, the beauty of their devotions, the meekness of their trust and the joy of their spirits, transfuse themselves into our minds, and we cherish them as living elements in ourselves, while the thought of them, not a painful memory, but the living thought of them, goes with us and contributes still to the deepest joy of our souls.

The distinction here is an essential one. There are those who endeavor to shake off all thought of what is painful in their past experience. They shrink from it as they would from a contagious disease. Others again live in the painful memories of the past, contrasting their condition, their hopes and prospects then with what they now are. Neither of these is the true course. We are to go on, carrying with us all that we have gained from our past experience, the wisdom,

the purified affections, the profounder life, the precious memories,—all these we are to carry on with us, a vital part of our spiritual being. As from the faded, mouldering vegetation of the last autumn new flowers arise, or rather as from the dying clay of a Christian friend a glorious spirit goes forth into its everlasting joy, so from the perishing materials of the past, our departed successes, enjoyments, sorrows or friends, there comes to the religious heart a something which it did not have before, and which may go with it a refining and enriching influence, a permanent portion of its life, which cannot leave it, though the world itself should be dissolved. It is not to be gained by moping in the tombs of departed pleasures or endearments, or by exhausting our strength in mourning for what cannot be recalled; but through our fidelity in the use of blessings or trials while they continue with us, we are to receive their best influence into our hearts and so use them that to us they cannot die.

The present is the appointed time for us. It must be enlightened by the knowledge gained from the past, and a wise regard to the future. Our plans must be laid out with reference to both. The far-reaching intellect of man was not given for nothing. It must direct us in selecting what we shall do and in the way of doing it. But the present moment is always the important moment for us. If we neglect it, we cannot go back and pick it up. We can only accept what the next moment brings, and go on profiting by each hour and each day as it comes. Each period of life has, for each one of us, its own peculiar pleasures, duties or sorrows, to be enjoyed, performed or endured, and then resigned. We must not push them aside, neither must we cling to them beyond the appointed time. We must use them wisely, and then, leaving them behind, carry with us the inward life which they have given. But how are we using them—the moments as they come? What is the life that we are drawing from them? That is the important question. What is the life that we are extracting from our present experience? We mourn dead friends. That may be well; but what use do we make of living ones? This is the more vital question of the two;

for they will soon be dead. While stopping to think how much more we might have done for a dear friend, now taken, or how much more we might have been improved by intercourse with him, we forget another not less dear, till he also is gone, and new regrets prevent perhaps the performance of new duties to those who still live. We lament the loss of opportunities which we ought to have improved, and while we mourn, other opportunities not less precious are suffered to pass by and increase the bitterness of our regrets.

Our past lives seem to us misspent. We cannot help that now. But how are we using the present hours? For they will soon be past. Are we cherishing the affections and the hopes which shall linger with us when the objects and events by which they were awakened have fled? We cannot be what we had once hoped to be; but are we all that we can be? Providence has changed our attitude or our condition. We may not be responsible for that. But do we make the most of it as it now is? It may be too late for that which we had once desired; but do we use such means as are still left, and secure to ourselves in its stead the best thing for which it is not too late? Above all, do we thankfully receive and cherish all the heavenly influences that God would breathe in upon us through our present experience?

Every condition, every day, has its new events, pleasures, griefs, or whatever else God may appoint, and our business is, with a wise and Christian earnestness, to throw ourselves each day into the duties, pleasures, trials of the day, in a Christ-like spirit giving ourselves up to them. So shall we reap from them, day by day, the freshness of a new life, even as the flocks, under the morning dews, find the sweet grass where in the blazing sun of yesterday there had seemed only a dearth, and all the sweeter now because then cropped so close. And so it shall be with each new day. The field of labor, which had seemed exhausted, shall be clothed anew as from our night of sleep we go to our morning's work. And each new year will take us into a richer and fresher life.

If we dwell constantly on the past, our thoughts must grow monotonous and old; for there is no life or change there. If

we are constantly taken up with the future, the ideal world we there create and dwell in must be pinched by the poverty of our minds. We have not resources enough to form, even in our imaginations, a constant succession of new scenes, rising life-like and beautiful one from another. Cloud-castles though they are that we build, they have not the perpetual variety and magnificence that we see if we look out upon the earth and sky. The only everlastingly self-renewing life, clothing itself always with new forms, and able always to impart new life to us, resides in the present moment, the duties, pleasures, griefs, the little incidents or great events, which it is constantly turning up before us, that we may engage in them and partake of their freshness.

Men sometimes talk of the narrowness of the present. And it is in one sense narrow ; but in another sense it sweeps on as wide as the universe of God, comprehending within itself all the things that are, and unfolding to us, as we are ready to behold them, one after another of the glorious things that are placed around us, removing the shadows, solving the problems, calling out the resources of man, and the universe, and bringing both into sublime and beautiful relations with each other and with Him who has created both and so nicely adjusted each to the other's lowest and loftiest wants. The trouble with us is not that we give ourselves up so exclusively to the present, but that we fail to recognize its highest meaning. Friendship, business, pleasure even, has for us, if our souls are in the right attitude, a significance, deep as the everlasting life of man. Among the multitudes, when the thousands were miraculously fed by our Saviour, there were those who saw only what came to satisfy their bodily hunger. They went away to hunger again. But there were also those who in that same present act recognized the Saviour of the world, the bread from heaven, which whosoever eateth, he shall hunger no more. There was one among the apostles who carried the bag to his destruction, though he may have obeyed his master in giving often to the poor ; and among those who may not have known him there was one poor widow with a sublime religious faith and a charity deep as the

immortal soul, wholly absorbed in the present act of casting all that she had — it was but a single farthing — into the treasury, and with her that was an act which penetrated her inmost soul and lifted her up into a more blessed intimacy with God, and called down upon her the everlasting commendation and benediction of the Saviour of men.

We have but to catch the best expression of each moment as God places it before us, and make it ours by living up to it, and we shall at length be filled with all the fulness of God. Whatever of beauty or wisdom there is in nature, imparts itself to us. The higher beauty which there is in small offices love and duly faithfully performed, comes, a holy teacher and comforter, to take up its abode in us. And the profound humility with which we bow ourselves before the Almighty, the tears of penitence with which we confess our sins, the meek and confiding simplicity with which we put ourselves, as little children, into our Father's arms, and the serene and beautiful affections which are thus made to bind us to him and to all his children on earth or in heaven, may also enrich us with the treasures of a heavenly love. And shall we not secure them to ourselves? Let us not by turning constantly back become pillars of salt, but as living followers of Jesus and sons of God in whose eternity we should live, let us go on day by day in living connection with whatever the day may bring, fleeing from the destruction that is behind to the life and joy that are forever springing around the faithful and the pure in heart, like flowers in the breath of spring. This throwing ourselves with our whole souls into the duty of each moment whether that duty be one of action or endurance, is the only way to preserve always the freshness of our thoughts, so that the dews which gladdened our youth shall fall as freshly on the hopes of our declining years, and the rays of heavenly light that shone so softly on our cradle, shall fall as softly on our dying bed.

MY APOLOGY.

BY REV. RUFUS ELLIS.

I AM sometimes asked, always in a very friendly spirit, about my relation to the people called Unitarians, the measure of my assent to their doctrines, and of my sympathy with their methods, and why I have been occasionally invited to preach to congregations which are classed as Trinitarian. I will answer these questions in a few words, which shall be as plain as may be.

I am sorry to begin with a negation, and can only express the hope that my ending may be with a yea as decided as my opening nay. I am sorry to begin with a negation, and yet I must say that, for us who are Protestants, Christianity cannot again be a dogmatic and sectarian religion after the manner in which dogmas are held and taught by any of the various Protestant sects. The only consistent dogmatism of this kind is the dogmatism of the Roman Catholic. Between this and a Christian latitudinarianism there is no middle ground. The Canon of Scripture, the Quality of Scripture, the Doctrines of Scripture, the Ordinances and Discipline which are enjoined by Scripture, are still before Protestants as subjects of inquiry, and so far as they are subjects of inquiry and of fair controversy they cannot consistently be made matters of dogma. The Roman Catholic believes that we learn from the church what is to be accounted Holy Scripture, and that it is the function of the church to gather from this Scripture and set forth in fit proportion the revelation from God which it contains. The individual Christian is simply called upon to hear the church. The Protestant, on the other hand, with such help as he can gain from heaven and from men, undertakes to decide upon the Canon of the Bible, and to interpret the meaning of its inspired words. Now it is no theory, but a fact of which the history of Protestantism is a long and often sad illustration, that if we look for those definite results from Protestant inquiries which alone have been accepted as

deserving the name of dogmas, they are not to be found. A large-minded, well-instructed, and careful thinker will be the last, unless controlled in his decision, consciously or unconsciously by a teaching church, to assent with any good degree of literalness and exactness, indeed in any save a broad way, to a single dogmatical affirmation of our multiform Protestantism.

Let us take some examples. Here is one who is distinctively known as a Bible Christian, saying ever, "The Bible, the Bible, is the religion of Protestants." He ought to know, perhaps does know, that there are open questions about the number and the relative value and the inspiration of the books, making it impossible for a reasonable man to dogmatize with the popular Protestantism about the Bible as a whole and as we have it in our hands, and to insist that every part of it shall be equally appealed to as a treasury of doctrine and discipline. Here again is a Trinitarian Christian, but if as a Protestant he gathers the dogma of the Trinity from the Bible, he knows that at least it does not lie upon the surface of the book, that the word "Trinity" is not in the book at all, that the doctrine can be maintained only as an inference, that in no passage is the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, distinctly called God, and that the strongest affirmations of the divineness of our Saviour are offset by affirmations as strong of his subordination to his Father and our Father. Moreover, in order that no violence may be done to the Divine Unity, the word "person" in the assertion of Tri-personality must be understood, if it can be said to be understood at all, in some non-natural or at least transcendental sense. Here, on the other hand, is a Unitarian Christian, and he would fain believe that he can set forth from Scripture a plain doctrine of God and Christ and of their relation each to the other; but the dogma concerning this great subject as held by Dr. Furness is an altogether different dogma from that which Dr. Sears unfolds, and yet neither the one nor the other will accept Trinitarianism. The unprejudiced Unitarian finds so much even in the three earlier Gospels which seems to lift our Saviour to the throne of the Highest, as he who

forgives sins, who comforts the mourner, who will be loved beyond father, mother, wife, child, who judges the world, and so much in the Fourth Gospel that witnesses for his consciousness of a life with God, before all worlds, that his Unitarianism, when he comes to formulate it, is hardly recognized as Unitarian at all, and he finds himself much more widely parted from his humanitarian brethren than from those who are classed as Trinitarians. Where Unitarianism is not simple humanitarianism it is notoriously impossible to formulate it, and whatever may be said in the way of reasoning for simple humanitarianism, I cannot understand how any unprejudiced reader could undertake to deduce it from the New Testament as a Protestant dogma. Here yet again is a believer in the vicarious atonement. Does he need to be told that the dogma rests upon a very few words of St. Paul which certainly admit of a figurative interpretation and have been most variously interpreted from age to age and by students of equally sound reputation for orthodoxy? Will he be clear and certain and dogmatic upon this theme in the face of the Lord's blessed parable of the Prodigal Son? Must he not say here, too, unless the church is to be allowed to speak for him, "It is a great mystery, this dying of One for all: I cannot dogmatize about it"? And here is one who presses the dogma so precious, if broadly and spiritually received, of justification by faith *only*,—does he need, as a Bible reading and Bible heeding Protestant, to be told that St. James in his great Epistle says expressly that we are *not* saved by faith only, whilst even St. Paul declares at the most that we are saved by faith? Again the dogma of an original sin in which each child of Adam is involved rests upon one or two texts. And what will the high Calvinist make of the Scripture which affirms that "God willeth not the death of a sinner"? Or how will the Christian optimist square his pleasant and so-called "genial" dogmatizing with the words of Jesus, "Good were it for that man if he had never been born"? I repeat then that our religion cannot any longer be dogmatic for the Protestant as the Protestant sects are dogmatic, as Trinitarians, Unitarians, Baptists, Methodists, Calvinists, Episcopa-

lians, are dogmatic. Each and all they must qualify and explain away more or less, and stand forth only for the substance of doctrine or appeal to tradition and usage because Scripture disappoints their expectation. The Baptist, for example, truly maintains that not a single text in the Bible enjoins the baptism of an infant; but he must also admit that baptizing any in any way is not emphasized by our Lord or his apostles as one would say it would have been had it been so absolutely essential both in essence and in form as many maintain. Protestantism cannot be clearly, unequivocally, and specifically dogmatic. Indeed, save in its confessions, it is so no longer. The books, the catechisms, are most of them stereotyped, and accordingly say what they have said for centuries; but the really living preachers, with few exceptions, do not. Protestantism as it is now taught and enforced in the pulpits speaks very freely, and is not zealous to urge the clear-cut dogma, the jot and tittle of doctrine. The preachers all know that there is another side, the Trinitarian that the Unitarian could say something too if he were there; the Unitarian that the Trinitarian could say something if he were there; so through the whole long catalogue amongst those whose teaching is of any consequence.

Now what I have been trying to say may be my own apology for a want of denominational zeal of which I have never made any secret. If being born and bred a Unitarian, and honestly choosing and preferring to work amongst Unitarians, I have done little for Unitarianism in all these thirty years and more, I can only say that if I had been born and bred a Trinitarian, I should have done no more in such years for Trinitarianism. One is provoked sometimes by Trinitarian bigotry, by some sectarian raid upon your premises, to remind the Trinitarian that there are other texts besides his Trinitarian texts, and very strong ones too, and another side altogether, and one is tempted sometimes by Unitarian bigotry to bring our difficulties into the light, and to insist that a man may be a Trinitarian without being an idiot, which to some Unitarians seems incredible. But in a world so steeped as ours is in sins and miseries there is very little satisfac-

tion to be gained from any work of this sort, and it is mostly upon the surface. In the progress of Christian inquiry, in the study of Scripture, in the comparison of the views of different denominations of Christians, it has come to this, that many of us at least cannot speak as Trinitarians or Unitarians, as Calvinists or Arminians, as Episcopalians or Baptists, with that pronouncing of the dogma which wins converts to the sect, and keeps the family compactly and vitally together for offense and defense. We are looking towards union, far off as it still must be. Finding that much which was most unreasonable and unscriptural in the older dogmatizing is going by default, we who have been trained as we think more reasonably and scripturally are not stirred to very vigorous opposition and denial, we are rather moved to thankfulness that so many in the straiter Protestant sects are preaching to-day a Christianity in which all Christians are agreed and retain their old catechisms and symbols, rather from the force of old associations and as records of what was once believed, than as true expression of present religious experience, and if we are invited to occupy their pulpits do not feel bound to regard the field as missionary ground and preach against total depravity and infant damnation. I am not then a zealous Unitarian. I would rather hear nothing of the name. I believe that it was at my request that the National Conference was called the Conference of Unitarian and other Christian Churches, a name which does not confine the meeting to one body of believers. So far as this Conference seeks to advance the Unitarian sect as a sect I cannot claim to be much interested in it. So far as it invites any who feel tied and bound by the chains of Protestant dogmas to come together in the confession of a broad Christianity and of a personal Saviour I am deeply interested in it, and in all the churches which it truly represents, and my attachment to my own congregation, and to the congregations which are more or less closely connected with it, proceeds from what I believe to be a fact that we have amongst us more perhaps than anywhere else, freedom to be Christians in an undogmatic way. Undoubtedly our unwritten creed does somewhat limit our

inquiries and restrain our utterances, though not nearly so much as the written and printed and stereotyped creeds of the other sects ; but we have in this way all that any reasonable man can ask, a measure of religious freedom for which we ought to be very grateful to the early Unitarians who have fought the fight for us. It may seem paradoxical to say it, and a strange reason to give for cleaving to a body of Christians ; but I suppose that one of my strongest ties to this liberal communion has been the greater possibility of working with the Unitarians than with any other denomination without pronouncing the shibboleth of a sect and pretending to be more a Unitarian than I really am. And now any who may have followed me so far must be more than ready to ask, What then are you zealous about ? What is there that is positive and pronounced in your purpose ? What would you have our churches engage in together ?

I. I answer, first, we have to come to the succor of the Protestant against the Romanist, yes to protect Protestantism against the effect of its own groundless assumptions by showing that Christianity lives and works in the world not through dogmas, in the common understanding of that word, but through facts, truths, and experiences which are assumed in all particular statements and are common to all who can in any reasonable sense be called believers. The Romanist says, You tell us that God has given you a revelation : now inasmuch as you Protestants are not agreed as to what this revelation teaches, whether, for example, it teach Unitarianism or Trinitarianism, you are convicted of saying that God has given you something to believe, and yet has not enabled you to find out what it is which you are to believe. Now our church is inspired of God to explain the Word of God for you : hear, know, live. The answer to the Romanist must be, True, we are not agreed as to the teaching of Scripture upon Trinity and Unity, but nevertheless God has made a revelation to us by the lips and in the life of his Son and in the souls of his disciples about which we are agreed and which is very positive and very helpful. It was said of one at the great council of Nicaea, and he was a layman of course, that he

stepped forward in the midst of that eager dispute about the nature of our Saviour and said, "Christ and his apostles left us not a system of logic nor a vain deceit, but a naked truth, to be guarded by faith and good works." In other words, Christianity is not revealed to the wise and prudent, so far forth as they are wise and prudent, but is independent of the science of Christianity, the science which the Romanist and the Protestant dogmatizers undertake to supply. And to say that the efficiency of the gospel depends upon the science of the gospel would be all the same as saying that water would not wash the hands of a man who did not know that it was made of oxygen and hydrogen, or that the sun would not warm a man who had never heard of the solar spectrum. The science of Christianity is hidden under the surface of the New Testament. The study of it may be exceedingly rewarding, as it is very interesting; but like all other scientific study it must be prosecuted in freedom. Christianity itself was in the world before a line of the New Testament was written, and is upon the surface of certain Scriptures of that Book the genuineness of which is universally acknowledged, and it comes to us in great facts, natural and supernatural, in broad doctrines and in widely felt experiences which constitute a gift of grace and truth from heaven, so signaled and witnessed that we can recognize it by its own light and by its peculiar works. If a man thinks that the Bible can be nothing to him unless it pronounces categorically and exclusively in favor of some one sect, then the sooner he goes to Rome the better; the sooner, for even that refuge seems to be threatened. But if what we want is God in Christ, revealing divine fatherhood and human brotherhood, calling men to repentance, filling them with a new omnipotence of love, quickening them to hope for time and for eternity, what becomes of all the talk about the uncertainties and diversities of Christian doctrine, the variations of Protestantism, and the diversions of Christians? The forms of truth are various, but the truth as it is in Jesus is one. We can have all the truth we need if we seek for it through obedience, by doing the Master's will, and we soon understand

what is that good and perfect gift which has come to our world from the Father of lights. I know that to many thoughtful and experienced persons it seems impossible that Christianity should be held in any efficiency except with a certain narrowness and incisiveness of statement, at least on paper, as the zealous Trinitarian, Unitarian, Episcopalian, holds it, and this is in accordance with the traditions and the experience both of Romanism and of Protestantism ; but on the other hand there has been not a little experience of men as moderate in letter and dogma as they have been earnest in spirit and truth : and if this method of our religion comes last, is it not the good wine which the Master of the feast has been keeping until now ? There must be indeed on the part of the Christian latitudinarian a vigorous grasp of what is essential and universal in the gospel with an inward recognition of its great comprehensive truths, the life must indeed be more than the meat and the body, more than the raiment ; but this is only to say that the time has come for a very real Christianity, or for none.

II. So much touching the relations of a liberal Christianity to the Protestant sects. I can only in conclusion say a single word of what this liberal Christianity ought to be to the multitude of persons who are indifferent to the gospel. We have a very exacting duty to these. In the decline of church authority and the decay of Protestant dogmatism men have come to fancy that Christianity no longer speaks or can speak with clearness, certainty, and power. With all our sciences and railroads and telegraphs for week days, we must go back on Sundays to Plato and Cicero, and they would have us join them in an endeavor to argue out a religion from the very elements. Let it be distinctly understood that we propose nothing so visionary and hopeless. That would take a lifetime at least, and meanwhile what should we live by ? Religions have always been given to men : they have never been argued out. Surely Christianity is no exception to this law. Christianity has been given to us. It holds us still. We walk and work by faith in it. Its Master binds us to himself by the virtue that is in him and

that goes out from him. He tells us what we should never have learned for ourselves, but what we know to be true when we hear it. He comes to us from above. It is this faith of ours which we would impart; speaking in the name of Jesus we tell men what they are longing to hear of God and providence and immortality, and anticipate the inquiries of centuries with words from the heavens. Doubtful as we may be about this and the other dogma by which the sects are characterized, we assume in all our teaching and working the authority of Christ, satisfying but never stirring inquiry as to this authority, seeking to remove but never encouraging doubts as to this Lordship. We have an inheritance of Christianity. Given to us, we seek to give it to others, that they too may walk by faith and not by sight. And for such of us as have this faith it may be even a duty to assemble ourselves that we may increase it together, and increase others in it, and strive to make it perfect in works. That is the best conference of any sect in which the sect is forgotten and Christianity is made all in all; and the sect which shall believe in this way shall gather and bind a discipleship that no man can number. We ought to do what we can, and perhaps we can do a little to make all our conferences such gatherings. Our freedom can in no sense be limited by any ecclesiastical legislation, and our hearts may be quickened into new trust and hope by faithful words, and if we can advance the kingdom of God we shall be sure to further all that is good in that section of the church where a wise and loving Providence has given us a place and duty and true enjoyment.

THERE are moments when every soul feels the need of solitude, the necessity of withdrawing itself from every human heart. The nearest and dearest cannot be with us in those hours. The soul needs to be balanced. The life-cord which binds us to the Infinite becomes worn and attenuated; but while we rest in prayer the
es are strengthened.

FOR THE NEW YEAR.

ON CHEERFULNESS AND SOBRIETY.

A SERMON. BY ORVILLE DEWEY, D.D.

Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice. Let your moderation be known to all men. — PHILIPPIANS iv. 4, 5.

WHAT strikes us in this passage is the connection of thought. It is, in other words, the combination of qualities presented to our notice,—joy, exceeding joy, and yet moderation, or mildness as it is rendered by some,—this is the apparent antithesis of the passage, and yet the real harmony of the character which it recommends. Has it not some foundation in our nature, yet more in reflection, and most of all in the great model which is set before us for our imitation?

We know that the bright and the dark mingle together in our life; joy and sorrow are near neighbors; light everywhere casts its shadow: the gayest coloring of human experience is ever toned down by soberer tints. All things not only suggest their opposites, but tend to produce them. Inspiring music often makes men sad. And devotion has its reaction: and it is natural. The deep sorrows that mingled with the raptures of Ignatius Loyola and David Brainerd were all natural. There may be some angelic state in which joy is permanent, in which ecstasy may be the permanent habit of the soul. But here, in our mortal state, where the bright, swift stream ever wears its channel, where the intensity of pleasure verges upon the sharpness of pain, where activity produces exhaustion, there is something in our very nature that falls in with the tenor of the Apostolic exhortation: "Rejoice, and again I say rejoice. Let your moderation be known to all men."

Reflection often brings with it a similar result. Many, I doubt not, have felt it during the gratulations of the present Season. It is a season of happy wishes and friendly greetings, of festivity and recreation, of music and dancing. Such

tokens of joy are not forbidden. The holy teachers whom we receive as heaven sent do not call upon us to be always serious. Those of the ancient Hebrew time appointed Seasons of festivity and rejoicing. The new year with the Hebrews had its festival. It was called "the feast of trumpets." The trumpets on that day sounded from morning till evening, — a demonstration of public rejoicing similar to our ringing of church bells. Labor ceased on the new year's day; and it was made a day of feasting, a day of gladness. The Christian dispensation did not ordain *festival days*, though the Catholic Church has appointed many. But it is represented as happier than the ancient; and the spirit of joy perpetually bursts forth, even from the lips of its suffering Apostles, saying, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice:" yea, "count it all joy when ye fall into divers trials." It is meet, then, that we should rejoice in such a season as this, and give all suitable demonstrations of rejoicing. But the gay and festive assembly! does it never touch a deeper thought? I must confess that with me it often touches the deepest; and that I am seldom made more sober, or moved to livelier gratitude or devotion, than by such a spectacle. The "*happy new year*" that falls from millions of tongues, does it not often meet the silent response, "I wish it were"? The joyous annunciation of the new-come year, — heard when the stroke of the midnight bell has passed, or heard in the early morning, — does it not awaken a sober and even solemn feeling of gratitude that our lives have been lengthened out another year? and does not this very feeling imply a touching consciousness that our life is ever frail and uncertain? Does not this bright circle of time, when we reach it, remind us how rapidly these circles are advancing upon our path and cutting off the brief space of our mortal existence?

I know not how it may be with others, but for my own part, I find a strange sadness in life, — *strange*, I say, because without experience I should not have looked for it. In my idlest or gayest walk, I find that guardian, restraining bonds are around me. Every impulse has its check. It seems ever as if some great hand were laid upon our human-

ity ; as if a voice were ever saying, "Thou mayest not go too far ; thy joys shall be tempered with sobriety ; thine ecstasy shall sink to gentleness and sadness ; thy grandest prosperity shall move thee to meditation." And is it not true ? When this majestic universe, above, around, beneath us, the all-beautiful, the all-glorious, moves me to rapture, does it not, at the same time, awe me to humility ; as when Paul "was caught up into the third heavens, a *thorn* was given him in the flesh lest he should be exalted out of measure" ? Where the affections are fullest of joy and satisfaction, as on the threshold of domestic life, of a new-built home, yet there, on that threshold, is not *marriage* ever accompanied with that solemn moment "till death" ? Is it not baptized often with mingled smiles and tears ? And there in that sanctuary of home, too, rise not the fondest parental hope and joy interwoven with serious care and anxiety and fear ? And when a man is elevated to the highest pinnacle of power or honor, when the wide world around echoes his fame, pronouncing the words "gigantic intellect, transcendent faculties, a name that shall live forever !" do not *his* thoughts sometimes involuntarily turn to the reverse side of the picture, to frailty and feebleness and death, to the coming hour when he shall say, "To-morrow all that is mortal of me will be no more" ?

That which nature in us favors, and reflection teaches, is more fully unfolded in our Christianity, and is embodied, indeed, in its very ideal of excellence. The combination is presented as I have said, in our text. What Paul says of his visions, to which I have referred, is of the same character. The heavenly discipline, though it permitted celestial glories to be opened to his eye, would not suffer him to be proud nor self-sufficient, nor to forget that he was a weak man, whose foundation was in the dust.

In our religion, a certain sedateness, calmness, self-subsistence is inculcated. It does not allow us to be carried about by every word of doctrine nor by every wave of excitement ; nor to yield to every impulse, nor to take our fancies for guidance ; but commands us to "prove all things and to hold fast that which is good." In Christianity, excess, extravagance,

partial culture finds no countenance. It is not one-sided, but possesses that attribute which I hope is coming more and more to be understood as the attribute of all true wisdom and genius; that is to say, it is all-sided. It has a place for all the genuine powers and sentiments of our nature; for hope and fear, for courage and humility, for confidence and modesty, for effort and patience, for strength and resignation, for joy and sorrow. It teaches how to abound and how to want; how to relinquish all things and yet to gain all things; how to be humbled and yet exalted; how to serve and yet to reign; how to lose our life, and yet to save it forever. Its paradoxes, as they are called, are the profoundest depths of wisdom. There is no inconsistency between hope and fear, between faith and doubt, between humility and grandeur, between self-renunciation and self-saving; they are all counterparts of one another in their very nature. As many strains in music combine to make harmony; as many-colored rays to form the perfect sunlight; as many and various materials are shaped into the rounded and beautiful world, and neither fire nor water, nor rock nor soil nor mountain nor valley, nor cedar of Lebanon, nor hyssop that springeth by the wall, may be wanting; so is it in the blended perfection of the Christian character.

Not one of the Apostles was an eccentric or extravagant person. Peter was doubtless the most impulsive among them; what awful discipline was appointed to him, to bring him to sobriety, modesty and self-distrust! In the character of Paul perhaps nothing was more remarkable than the combination of its qualities. Our first impression with regard to him, derived from his whole career and writings, is, that he was a man of remarkable energy and even vehemence of spirit. Whether as Saul the persecutor or Paul the convert, whether as pleader before Festus and Agrippa or as apostle to the churches, he was resolute, determined, bold, almost impetuous. His very style of writing shows one of the most earnest and vehement spirits with which history or biography has made us acquainted: and yet it would be difficult to find, either among classic or modern examples, anything equal to his tenderness and delicacy and pathos. He poured out

his mind and heart upon his page, with almost unexampled freedom and simplicity ; and yet there was no weakness nor sentimentalism ; no one ever connected with St. Paul any ideas at variance with perfect firmness, manliness, and dignity. Lofty and lowly, magnanimous and gentle, fervent and prudent, honest and courteous, he presents us with one of the most perfect examples on record, of a balanced and harmonious character. His own words are the best description of it : " By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering ; by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned ; as dying and behold we live ; as sorrowful yet always rejoicing ; as having nothing yet having all things." And in the same spirit he exhorts that they who weep be as though they wept not ; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not ; and they that buy as though they possessed not ; and they that use this world as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passeth away."

But let us look at the character and life of Christ. His is the great example. It is the great example to the world, even where it is not received as the great salvation. No being who has stood in the world, has ever occupied such a place as the model man.

I have often wished that we could go behind the curtain of vague generality with which his inward life is surrounded, and survey its living springs ; that we could penetrate the shrine which Christendom has thrown around it, and commune with the Divinity and humanity within. If any one has attempted to do this, if he has sought to go behind the public mission of Christ, and to inquire what were the characteristic traits of his mind, and what were its free actings in the privacy of life, he may have ventured to ask, what was the temperament of this wonderful being, what the tone of his thought ; was it bold or gentle, lofty or lowly, joyous or saddened ? Now the answer is, that it was all these ; that in him was nothing in excess, nothing of defect ; but that all was moulded and blended, into the image of perfection.

With this view let us look at some of the occasions of his life ; and, especially in connection with the tenor of our present discourse, let us see how the lofty traits of his mind were

blended with tenderness and gentleness: how his rejoicing was ever touched with a holy and human sadness. Indeed the discrimination that I put forward here is of especial interest, in showing amidst all that was divine in him, how human he was.

We read that on a certain time, the spirit of Jesus was filled with joy and triumph; and he said, I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that while these things are hid from the wise and prudent thou hast revealed them unto babes. Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the son and he to whomsoever he will reveal him. What a sacred intimacy is here asserted, what a wondrous privilege! But now is his spirit lifted up to visions of supernatural power and glory. Far different is the tenor of his thoughts; for now it is that his mind, ever touched with compassion, descends to the humble way-side of life, and he utters that tender and memorable exhortation. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am weak and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Again, we read that the seventy disciples whom he had sent out returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said, "I beheld Satan fall as lightening from heaven. Behold I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you." "Triumphant power is yours, over all the foes of my kingdom: nevertheless"—is the sage admonition of his spirit,— "in this rejoice not that demons are subject unto you; but rejoice because your names are written in heaven." It is more joy, to be a good man approved of heaven, than to wield powers the most mighty and miraculous.

When the man born blind returns from his triumphant refutation of the angry and confounded priests, he says to him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" "Who is he, sir?" is the reply, "that I might believe on him." And Jesus says, "Thou hast both seen him and it is he that talk-

eth with thee." And he says, "Lord, I believe," and worships him. Then follows, no self-gratulation, but the solemn declaration, "For judgment, for spiritual discrimination am I come into this world, that they who see not might see, and that they who see might be made blind." In the marriage at Cana his answer to his mother is a striking reproof to *all* worldly views. A miracle, it would seem, his mother expected, from her significantly saying to the servants, "Do whatever he bids you." Doubtless she expected wondrous things of her son; doubtless there was something of maternal pride in her heart, as well as affectionate consideration for her friends who were giving the entertainment, when she says, "They have no wine." "Woman," is the reply, — not that this was a harsh appellation in the usage of that time, — "woman, what have I to do with thee?" literally, "what to me and thee?" that is, "what connection is there between the spiritual mission on which I am sent, and that of ambition or cares of hospitality?"

The Transfiguration was one of the most assuring confirmations given to Jesus of his divine commission. He converses with celestial beings; the garments of mortality seem to fall from him, and he is clothed with heavenly splendor. And yet it is on coming down from the mount of Transfiguration that he is found conversing with his disciples — upon what? Upon triumph and grandeur and glory to come? No, but upon rejection and suffering and death to come.

There were occasions when strong attestations were given to his claims; sometimes with the shouts and hosannas of a multitude. How does he receive them? Peter's testimony in the midst of the disciples was, perhaps, more grateful to him than any other; and he says, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee; but my Father who is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter," — well does thy name signify a rock, — "and on this rock, this grand confession of thine, I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." After this, what can be more striking than that which follows? "from that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer

many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." So strange and unintelligible to all worldly apprehension was this solemn foresight, so unexpected was this turn of the discourse, so did it seem to jar with the occasion, that Peter was emboldened to rebuke him, saying, "Be it far from thee, Lord : this shall not be unto thee."

At another time he enters Jerusalem with an admiring multitude, who cast their garments in the way before him, crying, "Hosanna to the son of David ; blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord ; hosanna in the highest." What were his thoughts amidst this crowd all eager to venerate and exalt him ? "And when he was come near," we read, "he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, 'If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace ; but now they are hid from thine eyes.'" In the same manner, after a strain of tremendous rebuke, in which he says, "Woe unto you, scribes ; woe unto you, Pharisees, hypocrites, fools and blind, serpents, generation of vipers,"—how touchingly does the tone of awful indignation soften into pity !—"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem ! thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee,"—it seems as if the indignant feeling returned for a moment,— "thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not !"

When certain Greeks sought him at the feast, and the disciples were evidently excited by this inquiry from afar, from a foreign and refined people, Jesus says, "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified." But how glorified ? "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it bringing forth much fruit. He that loveth his life, shall lose it ; and he that hateth his life, in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal. Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say ? Father save me from this hour ? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name."

The Sermon on the Mount receives a most touching significance from the circumstances in which it was delivered. This is the preface to that sermon: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom. And his fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought unto him all sick people, and the possessed, the lunatic and the palsied, and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee and from Decapolis and from Jerusalem and from Judea and from beyond Jordan." It was from this excited and thronging multitude, from more than kingly honor and from more than subject concourse, that Jesus retired to a mountain apart, with his disciples; and *these* were the (doubtless) strange and gracious words that fell from his lips: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; blessed are they that mourn; blessed are the meek; blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; blessed are the merciful; blessed are the pure in heart; blessed are the peacemakers; blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake; blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake."

But it is time to conclude. Jesus comes very near to our human experience, I have said, in this blended character. It is not all angelic loftiness that I see in him: it is something very human. I know of nothing in which he comes nearer to the conditions of my human experience. He was not a sinner, as I am. He needed not to repent, as I ought to do. But into the woof of his thought were woven the bright and the dark threads, even as in our own minds these hues color all moods, all pictures.

And therefore I am not surprised if into the festive holidays of this season come some sad thoughts; and we hear the call to rejoicing tempered with the caution to be restrained and moderate.

There comes indeed a time in life when anniversaries do not bring with them the gaiety they once did: when sad memories mingle with their rejoicings, or admonitions too of the rapidly shortening span of our lives.

But if our joy ought to be sobered, so should our sadness be cheered. Let our moderation appear in both respects. It is excess on either hand that is to be checked. I do not mean the excess of the moment. Let gaiety and sadness have their times and seasons; but neither must be allowed to *run on uncontrolled*: and happily in most cases they do not. Providence, nature, the laws of life, interpose for us: we are held in a wonderful balance between opposing tendencies.

And yet, do not Providence, nature, life, as well as the apostolic word, emphasize *joy* as the highest and best thing, saying, "Rejoice always, and again I say rejoice"? Is not light greater, vaster than darkness; darkness only the shadow which light casts? Are not the infinite heavens full of joy? Doth not God rejoice in his works? Hath he, the infinitely powerful, the infinitely bountiful, made a universe for pain and sorrow and darkness? In his bright universe can pain and sorrow be any thing but passing shadows? What a wonderful fountain flowing from Him, what a wonderful fountain of cheerful spirits, is opened, in every human heart! How joyous the world is, amidst all the dearth and desolation that often lie upon its path! Go out in the fields, go out into the streets, and you shall hear a hundred tones indicative of enjoyment for one that tells of pain. How does "hope spring immortal in the human breast"—hope, not despair: put what weights you will upon the sacred, immortal energies of manhood, rarely can you sink it down to despair. And if with some sad and meditative steps we pass over the closing hours of the year; yet when the morning comes, we exclaim to one another, "happy new year!"—meaning not only the wish that it may be, but the feeling that it is happy. And if there be those, as there are, upon whose minds heavier burdens weigh,—burdens of care, of anxiety, of sorrow; burdens of doubt and spiritual darkness; ay, and the great burden of the everlasting, *human want*,—yet let us courageously say, with him of old, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul; and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God."

DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

BY AUGUSTUS WOODBURY.

By Divine Providence, I mean that government and care of the universe and the affairs of human life which, in the reason and the faith of man, is attributed to the Supreme Deity. If the creation of the universe and of the human family is the manifestation of Divine power,—or, so to speak, the outcome of the Divine being,—it would seem that the care of this creation devolved upon Him who gave it life. Surely, the Divine Creator would not make one great outpouring of life, and then retire from the scene. He would not bring a universe into being and then leave it to take care of itself. We cannot regard this mighty frame of things as a vast machine, which has been set in motion at some inconceivably remote period of time, and which, since then, has run of its own impetus. We recognize the existence of certain laws or certain forces, which govern the motions of material things, and which to a certain extent control the thoughts, the opinions, the feelings and the acts of mankind. But what we call laws are really the intelligible modes of action, which the things around us exhibit. Thus the laws of electricity, or those of light and heat are simply the methods by which these substances act. Those we can understand. Scientific men are daily teaching us more and more of them, as they are making closer researches and wider discoveries. But of the power, which has bestowed the properties of forces, and has decreed these methods, we know but little by research and discovery. Professor Huxley thinks he has discovered the physical basis of life,—that on which all life rests and with which all life begins. But, although he is apparently somewhat unwilling to admit the necessity of Divine agency, he is still frank enough to confess, that there is a wide and deep gulf still existing between the basis of life and its cause. He has ascertained the place of the foundation, and has marked the lines of its courses, but by what secret hand it has been

laid, he does not know. That, indeed, is the most reluctant, the most obstinate secret of nature. For who, by searching, can find out God? Behind all laws, behind all forces, is still some spiritual power, which scientific analysis has not yet been able to reach, and human knowledge has not yet been able to scan. The question has sometimes been raised, whether one act of creation and one primal ordaining of the universal action be not sufficient, or whether our ideas of Deity do not require a continuous, a perpetual action. Is it necessary, that the Divine will should unceasingly exercise its volitions? If, as we have supposed, creation is the self-manifestation of Deity, then it must be perpetually going on, as Deity is perpetually manifesting Himself. We can hardly conceive of an inactive God. Electricity, gravitation, light, and heat,—I speak of these as representative of the numerous universal laws,—have always existed, however recent our knowledge of them may be, because God must always have manifested Himself in some such way. Or if we are not justified in saying this, we can at least say, that the human mind cannot compute the time when they were not, or determine the instant when they began to be. Yet, however long the period over which they extend, and however copious may have been their action, the universe is as full of their power to-day, as it was at the beginning. That invisible chain, which links together the suns and their attendant worlds, through all the boundless space, is as strong at this moment, as when, in creation's dawn, joined by it in sweet accord, the "morning stars sang" for joy, as the foundations of nature were fixed and its corner-stone was laid! Shall it ever grow weak? What, then, are all these forces, but the perpetually outflowings of the creative energy and life of God? If, as we are told, no particle of matter has been lost since the creation, I think we may safely say, that nothing of the invisible properties of the universe has been lost. It is true, that the electric spark dies out and vanishes in the darkness. But the productive power of electricity does not die out. When the conditions of its action are fulfilled, it is always found ready and prompt in its response. It is possible, that the objection

to the theory of the perpetual operation of Divine power springs from the feeling, that the work of creation and preservation requires a certain effort of the Divine will, or a certain interference of the Divine mind with the operations of nature. But in Deity there can be no effort, as there can be no exhaustion and no fatigue. And without the interference of Deity, how could nature exist? These laws and forces have been called — not irreverently — the “personal habits” of God — the natural and necessary exercise of the Divine faculty. “Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?”

Does God direct and rule the affairs of human life? The argument of Jesus upon this question is, that, if the Divine love has seen fit to clothe the flowers and the grass, which are perishable in their nature, it will certainly provide for man, the Divine child. If the Supreme Father does not permit even a sparrow — of which two were sold for a farthing — to fall without His notice, man, whose life is of infinite value in comparison, must not be anxious respecting the future. For, even before the foundation of the world, the infinite wisdom of God had made provision for human welfare. A favorite argument, to prove the Divine love and care, is deduced from the manner in which the wants of the animal creation are supplied,—the adaptation of dwelling-place, food, and the various means of supporting and continuing life, to the needs of particular species. “Does God care for oxen?” asks St. Paul. Yes, certainly, God does care for oxen, and for every other breathing, animate thing. For, if the Divine love is exhaustless, it does not stop in its outflow with the material creation and its laws and forces. It touches all the race of animals from the lowest to the highest, as the light touches every point within reach of its rays. This great principle of life, which pervades all things, proceeds from a Divine source. The Divine life is substantially the same with the Divine love.

Now, man’s life is in its essence immaterial and immortal. It does not die when the body ceases its functions. It continues to exercise its power among succeeding generations.

It is perpetuated in memory, in the influence which it exerts, in its reproductive faculty for shaping the character of individuals and communities. It is true, that material things have this power of influence,—as may be seen in the effects of climate, soil, the physical conformation of different parts of the globe, and the like. But man possesses the power in a higher degree, and of a higher character. For man can govern material influences, and make the powers of nature obedient to his will, and subservient to his purpose. If then, there be a divine Providence, which directs the movements of the material universe and exercises over it a controlling care, there must also be a Divine direction and a Divine care exercised over the affairs of human life—the immaterial universe of thought, of feeling, of moral purpose, of spiritual aspiration, of the beauty, grace, and virtue which belong to human character. And inasmuch as humanity is greater and better than the material creation, insomuch is the care and love of a higher quality. The Divine Providence, which moves and manifests itself through all the history of man, thus appears in brighter and more conspicuous light. The name of Christ was Emmanuel, God with us—and God has been with us from the beginning until now, and will be with us unto the end. The great events of human history have come out from the human mind and heart and will, and all these have been active under the direction of Divine influence. By some mysterious law of attraction, the tides of the ocean rise upon the shore. So on these shores of time flow and ebb the tides of human life. What precious things of human hope and human love they bear upon their surface! And Divine Providence holds them all as in an almighty hand. The great events and the small events of life—for all are human and grow out from humanity—come equally beneath the Divine supervision, and are alike directed by the Divine wisdom which superintends the whole. Does not every drop of water, in each little creek along the coast, feel the strange influence by which the ocean's mighty mass is moved? Each little life of ours is moved by the Divine impulse, as well as the great, wide sea of humanity in which it is merged. And

God — I think we may believe — God takes care of every one to see that none be lost !

Was this Divine impulse applied only at the beginning, or does it continue to be exerted all along the way ? Were the channels cut, in which the numerous streams of life were to run, and then mankind left to run in them perpetually ? The river on its course to the sea has, indeed, one general direction, though it may sometimes wander in many devious ways and with many windings, sometimes apparently doubling on its course. But in all its path it still feels drawn onward to its end. We do not say that it was started so at the beginning and that nothing more was needed than the start. Through every mile — aye, through every foot of the way — it has needed the impulse and the attraction, and it has felt them. I know that the argument from analogy is not conclusive. But we can well believe, that the laws of the Divine government are universal, not partial. The law of gravitation, which holds the planets in their places, operates continuously to carry the smallest stream along its course. There is a law of Divine gravitation, which holds all the great movements of human history to their appointed way, and which controls the actions and events of our daily lives. We are, indeed, left free to a certain extent. We have to ascertain the nature and application of Divine laws, and we have to put ourselves in accord with them. Human happiness and human welfare proceed from the concord of the human will with the Divine will. Human misery and human misfortune come from some discord between the two, which man falls into, either designedly, or knowingly, or through the force of circumstances. But the apparently ill effects of human exertion, which are sometimes witnessed, are not the fault of anything in the Divine government, and do not arise from any defect there. They are rather the results of human wilfulness, or human ignorance, or human weakness. So when I say, that this Divine care and love are continuously exercised, it does not necessarily follow that good fortune and happy experience shall always accompany our steps. For we may be ignorant how to use and enjoy that love ; we may disobey its kindly laws ; and we may

sometimes be overcome by the principle of evil, which rises in hostility to the Divine principle of good. But whatever temporary phenomena be witnessed, and whatever may be the particular experience, the general direction is always the same. Humanity always tends, under Divine direction, toward the ultimate, universal good.

The decision of the question, that is sometimes raised, as to the character of a general or special Providence, seems to be involved in the conclusion, to which this train of thought has led. It is not a question which can be easily settled. We can without much difficulty agree to the proposition, that the Deity has a general superintendence over the concerns of human life, and orders the great affairs of men. We can also believe that the great epochs and eras of history are Providential. There is a fulness of time, which is completed under Divine direction, for the appearance of a great prophet or sage, who turns the course of human life, according to his understanding of the Divine will and Divine truth. The lines of human effort and human thought converge to him as their centre, and then again diverge to the widest circumference of human life. We can readily believe, that a man is sometimes providentially trained for the most important actions — to be the leader of his age, the saviour of his country.

As we read his biography we do not hesitate to declare that we see the hand of Divine Providence in guiding his career. As we read the life-story of the human race we perceive that the true science of history recognizes the same Providential control. But it is hard to believe that God takes cognizance of small things as well as large; that the Divine love singles out a special object; that the Divine power interposes for the safety or the blessing of any particular soul. Yet why not? It has been well said, "Life is history, not poetry. It consists mainly of little things, rarely illumined by flashes of great heroism, rarely broken by great dangers, or demanding great exertions." But these little things are the materials of the great movement, and without them it would not be. If God, then, directs the large things of life, there can be no reason why the small things also should not

be guided by his hand. There are, it is true, certain theories which seem fanciful: as when we say, in the case of two persons who are in circumstances of peril, that God saves one, leaving the other to his fate; or that he prevents the earthquake or the pestilence from visiting one community, while he permits it to destroy another; or visits one continent or race or zone with the light of civilization, and abandons another to the darkness of perpetual ignorance. But a general Providence must include a special. The whole is made up of all its parts, as a ball of metal is formed by the compaction of all its atoms. The difficulty vanishes when we reflect that the Divine designs are wrought out by all events, the apparent good and ill mingled into one beneficent result, as different ingredients apparently of opposite character will produce a homogeneous whole.

We can believe in a Divine care which is exercised, not only over all universal life, but also over our daily course. Yet I think that we can hardly say that all this care is exercised directly. The Divine Hand does not appear visible before our eyes to guide the course of things. There is a hiding of the power of the Almighty. He does not take care of us personally, but he teaches us how to take care of each other. "He does not," says the Bishop of Salisbury, "by separate acts of creation give being and life to those creatures which are to be brought forth, but employs his living creatures thus to give effect to his will and pleasure, and as his agents to be the means of communicating life." But is not this the great wonder of organic life, — that it is made capable of propogating itself? And is not the wonder of the Divine law, — that you and I should be made the agents of Providential power and wisdom? Is it not marvelous that God should control the operations of history by making man capable of those deeds of greatness and heroism by which the world is moved onward in its course towards perfection? Here is the sublime secret of Providence, — that man should become a co-worker with Deity, and that the Divine plans for human good should come to their fruition through human agency.

Whence arises this faith in Divine Providence? I believe that it has its seat in the nature of the human soul, in the sense of need, the sense of weakness, the outlook of the soul toward a help and guidance beyond and above itself. I do not think that, in its original source within the soul, it is anything less than the attraction which kindred spirits feel towards each other. It is the instinctive trust of a child in its parent. It may sometimes die out unless it is properly and thoroughly cultivated, but when thus cultivated, it rises into the sublime and perfect faith which God's noblest children have cherished and shown. It is not altogether the result of experience. It is not the special fruit of Christianity. In the Stoical philosophy, particularly as developed in the writings of such men as Plutarch, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius, the truth of a superintending Providence is clearly inculcated and strongly enforced. "The first thing to learn," says one of these, "is, that there is a God, that his knowledge pervades the whole universe, and that it extends not only to our acts but to our thoughts and feelings. To have God for our maker and father and guardian, should not that emancipate us from all sadness and from all fear?" We know how the doctrine pervades the Old Testament scriptures. In every system of rational religion, as distinguished from idolatry, faith in a Divine Providence is as clearly recognized as a belief in a Divine Creator, Governor, and Lord. Christ's religion takes hold of this instinctive trust, develops it, enriches it, strengthens it, fills it out. Then the soul, without anxiety, without fear, without reserve, without doubt or questioning, commits itself to the guidance of its Heavenly Father and to his gracious keeping, — lays itself away, as it were, in the Father's arms, — and, whatever may come, or whatever may betide, believes that all will be for the best, that all things work together for good. Looking up, it sings in jubilant notes of praise and prayer, —

"In thine all-gracious providence
Our cheerful hopes confide:
Oh, let thy power be our defense,
Thy love our footsteps guide!"

SPIRITUALISM OF SCIENCE.

BY REV. WILLIAM E. COPELAND.

SOME persons, commonly termed infidels, have written extensively upon the religion of Science, and have attempted to enthrone Science as the religion of the world. Christian teachers have always bitterly opposed these efforts, and have emphatically declared that Science was materialistic, while Christianity alone was spiritual. To ascertain whether there is in Science any recognition of the spiritual is the object of this essay.

As regards God, the central spirit of the universe, Science by actual proof and by more convincing silence presents for man's worship a pure spirit. As Science advances more apparent becomes the order and wise arrangement of the universe, proving the agency of a wise and all-powerful mind. Those scientific essays most condemned for their materialism, because they say nothing of God, yet fail to find in matter the cause of the wise order prevalent everywhere, nor discern any origin for thought or spirit; proceeding in their search after first causes they at last stop, unable to find in matter anything further, and by this inability confess that God is the first cause, or that eternal spirit is behind the phenomena of matter. The provisions of Nature for the happiness of all creatures indicate the benevolence of the First Cause. Turn where you will you see traces of love. Science in treating of punishment gives a theory better suited to the words, "God is love," than the theory commonly held in the churches. For she declares that punishment is proportioned to actual sin, and is rather inflicted to prevent further transgression, than as vengeance for past misdeeds. We do not read much in scientific books of a personal God, but we find a plain revelation of an all-pervading spirit, orderly, wise and loving. It matters but little which department of Science you study, the same lesson is taught by all. And it is certainly more philosophical, more promotive of true religion, to con-

ceive of God as an impersonal spirit with divine attributes, than as a person arbitrary, cruel and changeable,—better a loving spirit impersonal, than a personification of matter. As further proof that Science is not Godless, we may bring forward the fact, that no more devout theists, or believers in one God, are to be found than scientific men, that is, masters in Science, not shallow pretenders.

Evil, Science teaches, is no material substance, but the result of imperfection, certain to vanish when spirit at length subordinates matter to itself. Evil is to good as darkness to light, rather the absence of good, than the presence of a distinct substance. Men sin, not because of the existence in themselves of a material entity poisoning their moral nature, but because they have not yet progressed to that point, where they can perfectly obey the laws ordained by their Creator. An evil man is one spiritually imperfect, not yet so possessed by spirit as to have developed beyond the beastly state.

Inspiration is no material speaking of God in words heard by the ear of flesh, but rather the knowledge of his will and purpose, imparted by God to all his creatures according to their capacity—to some more than to others. The most enlightened commit to writing the substance of their knowledge, and we have Sacred Books. Thus the prophets are raised from the position of mechanical agents to the nobler position of spiritual beings in closer union with the eternal spirit than their brethren, and the truly spiritual doctrine of the Quakers is proved, viz., that in each human being God implants the divine light, sufficient if allowed its full effects to lead all men to salvation.

The mechanical creation of man, as accepted by the churches when they teach that God made man as an artist a clay model, is supplanted by the more spiritual conception of a Creator, who by infusing his spirit into inert matter has developed higher and yet higher forms of life, until we have Jesus the divine man at the summit of creation. By no material convulsion is this accomplished, but by the ever present, ever active power of Deity. The whole theory of Natural Selection presupposes

a selector, the theory of evolution a spiritual power ever producing new transformations.

Man is to progress or be saved not by performing any material penance, not by a certain amount of suffering, either his own or that of another substituted for his, but by a full development of the noblest powers of his being — by the continued presence of order-compelling spirit. No mechanical transaction saves him, but a spiritual life advances him ever to greater heights of excellence. This we learn from the Science of History recording man's achievement and deducing therefore his future, and from Psychology setting forth man's nature and inducing his possibilities.

Religious materialism teaches that the larger portion of mankind are doomed to endless misery, which is pessimism teaching that evil conquers good and matter overcomes spirit. Science declares that creation is progressive. On every side we see advance, whether we examine the domain of Natural History and watch the change from a little sac of protoplasm to man with all his wondrous powers, or the domain of History and see the savage unable to comprehend the idea of spirit develop step by step up to Emerson who dwells altogether in the spirit. As this same Science teaches the universal reign of law and order, the same progress is in prospect, and the race shall go on from glory to glory. This is optimism teaching that good conquers evil and spirit overcomes matter.

Popular theology teaches a material resurrection, that the body glorified — but still matter — is to be man's residence through eternity. Science proves that the body being dust will return to the dust, and form a part of other organisms, while that which thinks, loves, worships, undetected by any material test and proved by the silence of Science to be spirit, indestructible as matter, independent of the body, not dying with it, — that is, immortal, — the spirit still lives though the body decay. Physical Science proves the impossibility of a material resurrection. History records a universal faith in immortality. Psychology shows a consciousness of spiritual

life not dependent on the body. Mental Science, or whatever you choose to call that department which treats of Mesmerism, Clairvoyance, the power of mind over mind and over matter, gives clear evidence of the existence of a spirit not using the body to manifest its powers, and therefore not destroyed by the death of the body. So we learn that the spiritual resurrection is the contribution to religion, not of Christianity but of Science.

Some may object that Science borrows its spiritualism from revealed religion, and that but for Christianity there would be only materialism. If by Christianity is meant the Calvinistic plan of salvation, which in one form or other prevails in most of the churches, I can only say that from materialism usurping the spiritual domain, we can look for but little aid to advance Spiritualism. If by Christianity is meant the spiritual religion which Jesus taught, I answer, great help has been gained from this to the establishment of a spiritual worship. And yet before Jesus spoke in Galilee, philosophers proclaimed Spiritualism, presented a spirit whom we were to worship in spirit; and those men of modern times who have made the largest contributions to this true religion have been, like Martineau, Chesub Kunder Sen, Macdonald, Beecher, men acquainted with Science. Jesus, unaided by Science, proclaimed a spiritual religion, but we, less perfect than the Master, cannot regain it from the materialism of the churches without the aid of Science. A consciousness of spirit existent before Christianity and never destroyed renewed as Science, failing to find a material cause for progress, or declaring that there is a point beyond which materialism cannot go, has retained spiritualism in the churches. Huxley, Darwin and Tyndall do more to confirm our faith in spirit than Edwards, Augustine and Calvin have ever done. Duty has become in the churches a material matter, either done to avoid blows or receive benefits. Duty, Science teaches, is to be performed because thus only can we attain that perfection which is the completion of our existence. We are to search for the truth, because it is necessary in God's order for our developement.

Between the religion of the popular church and the religion

of Science give me the latter, for it contains nobler conceptions of God, of man and of duty. But few scientific men, be their investigations in what department they may—as chemists, Geologists, Zoölogists, or Metaphysicians,—can remain materialists. They must confess the existence of spirit and its superiority over matter. Tyndall has rendered his name immortal by his discovery of the correlation of forces. Light, heat, electricity, vital force, etc., are all one and the same thing, change from one to the other—decide if you choose, that they are strictly material, which has never been proved—whence the order of their works? We must answer that they are directed by a power wise and orderly, not material; and now is the text of St. Paul made to glow with divine life, “God is all and in all.” These forces or this force is the manifestation of God working upon matter. We see the Divine Architect building the universe, and can only say as the last word of materialistic Science, “God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.” Astronomers have applied vast mental powers to the study of the heavenly bodies—deciding the relations of the stars to one another, resolving star-mist into constellations, even learning the constitution of remote suns, and can only say, “the hand that made them is divine.” Geologists with unwearying research roll over one page after another of the great stone book, unveiling the history of the earth from primeval times, and only show spirit’s creative work. Darwin traces the development of animate creation from the lowest form to the highest. He has much to say of Natural Selection, and in truth explains merely God’s method in creation. Trace the line of cause and effect never so remotely, and in matter the first cause cannot be found; these changes, progression and orderly development in matter must be the result of spirit’s activity. Why does one sac of protoplasm become a fish and another man. The answer can only be, God.

The Spiritualism of Science is no dream, but an actual fact which many Scientists admit, and those Radicals who look for Science to regenerate the world do not err so much as we at first think. Christianity, having shrunk into the grossest

materialism, is impotent to advance mankind in spiritual matters. Studying only the old theologies, which concern themselves alone with the materialistic plan of salvation, man can never be raised into the domain of spiritual freedom, but the new theology, which accepts the last discovery of Science as another proof of God's existence and man's spiritual nature, leads us into true Christian liberty.

Science is destructive of the prevalent Christianity, which is a slavery to the letter and form, but is constructive of the spiritual Christianity which Jesus proclaimed. Christianity and Science, married by Reason, are ordained of God to produce a nobler religion than men have yet known, which is still Christianity, if the message of Jesus be true, that religion is love to God and man, and salvation obtained by steadfast trust in the Father's love.

THE RUINED CRUCIFIX.

FROM THE GERMAN OF JULIUS STURM.

BESIDE the road, where sunbeams tremble o'er it,
There stands a plain, gray crucifix of stone ;
One half by clinging brambles overgrown,
The other buried in the ground that bore it.
The figure on the cross is weather-wasted,
The features all are marred ; a ring,— no more,
Betokens that the head a crown once wore,
Yet has the wand'rer oft to greet it hasted.
Think of the crucifix when thou art meeting
A brother-man, and give him kindly greeting
Upon thy way, whatever he may be :
For though disfigured by sin's worse defacement,
Thou seest, even in his deep abasement,
A ruin of God's image still is he.

S. C. R.

THE RELIGION OF THE SEA.

BY A. B. MUZZEY.

THE almost unbroken record of disasters on the deep has received within the passing months new and appalling lines of perils and sufferings, and deaths amid suspense and agony. We are liable at such a time to forget that these apparent judgments stand forth only occasionally from a background radiant with divine mercies.

When the creator of all things had completed his work, both the earth and the seas, he pronounced the whole to be "good." Not more did his blessing rest upon the one than upon the other. The Psalmist of Israel, in a fervent ascription of praise to the Lord for his wisdom and goodness, exclaims, "The earth is full of thy riches ; so is the great and wide sea." Yet, by a singular departure from this illustrious precedent, we seldom hear a tribute of thanks in Christian lands for the riches of the ocean. Poetry, the vehicle in its true uses of morals and piety, makes few allusions to the seas compared with its requisitions upon the land. In our collections of psalms and hymns you may find abundant reference to the God of field and wood, but few to the Lord of the Ocean. The pulpit almost never draws its themes of discourse from the great waters ; and, in its devotions, while the interests and perils of landsmen are subjects of habitual intercession, the hapless mariner is almost unnamed.

But so it should not be ; the Providence of God should be regarded as overarching the great deep no less than the solid land : and every created thing is hence designed to be a spirit-teacher. Accordingly, there is a Religion of the Sea.

The sacred writers were probably unacquainted with the ocean. Under the term seas they included only the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, and a few lesser ones. But if they have been able to elevate our minds by conceptions drawn from these smaller collections of waters, what might we not have anticipated had they known this mighty work of God, "sub-

lime, endless, image of eternity." If they, with their imperfect acquaintance with the works of God in the waters, were so impressed and inspired by a sense of his majesty and tender mercy, how much more should we, blessed with this wide knowledge, learn from it lessons of devoutness and virtue. The ocean is indeed replete with moral and religious instruction. With a thousand-tongued eloquence, it preaches daily of the divine ways and of human duties.

It reveals a God; not only affirming his existence, but proclaiming, with its many-voiced power, his glorious attributes.

It shows forth his almightiness. If the tornado and the earthquake speak of this perfection, they do it only at special seasons; but God putteth forth his might on the deep by a continual, uninterrupted energy. The waters rage round the globe, and but for his gracious mandate every rising tide would carry desolation and mourning to millions of our race. It is He that ruleth their raging; he setteth up bars and doors, and saith, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; here shalt thy proud waves be stayed." Not more truly did he cleave those waters through which Israel passed unharmed; not more did he, through the agency of his son Jesus, hush the tumultuous waves of Tiberias, than he now touches the deep, and, by his resistless finger, lays its rash surges.

The ocean testifies to the goodness of God. Consider what myriads of beings it contains, created to be happy. How affluent in life are the great waters; the shoals and millions that are drawn thence for human subsistence are but as a drop of the bucket. So enormous is their increase, that no finite power can exhaust or even sensibly diminish their numbers. We see multitudes tossed by the waves on the dry shores, and otherwise doomed to perish, and perhaps deem this sacrifice a mystery; yet, when we look at the mighty whole, and think of the joy of their existence, we realize the plenitude of the treasure, and feel that the sea, not less than the earth, is full of the riches of God's love.

What wisdom also is displayed in the economy of the deep. As the creator has given an atmosphere suited to us on the

land, so has he adapted the element of water to sustain the life of its occupants ; and an exchange of habitations is alike fatal to both.

Again, the dwellers in the ocean were made for our food ; but how shall they be procured ? God giveth man, savage or civilized, skill and patience so to busy himself upon its bosom that he can gain this treasure. Over these waters he must needs transfer what he has taken out of them ; to aid this and all the wide world of commercial enterprise, the Creator has set stars in the heavens to guide the mariner, and caused the winds to propel him, and given him genius to invent the steamship and a small instrument that, in darkness as in light, and amid the pathless waste, directs his course to the very point on this great globe he desires to reach.

The ocean, and particularly while we are actually borne up in its midst, cannot fail to awaken an especial sense of our dependence upon God. On the firm land we usually feel secure. Here man walks proudly in his own strength. But he cannot feel thus, amid the wild waves that bound the horizon, when at sea. It has been remarked that seamen are seldom unbelievers or sceptics ; they usually have a deep sense of the divine being and presence. They are indeed not seldom superstitious, ascribing many sights and sounds to supernatural agency which others trace to the known laws of nature. But a rational piety is likewise fostered by the ocean. How can he whose life is passed amid the perils of the deep, where thunders roll and lightnings blaze, and gales threaten, and yawning waves devour ; where rocks and shoals menace, and fires consume ; where mutiny abounds, and the remorseless pirate gluts himself with gold and blood, how can he live there and thus and be an irreligious man ? We sometimes speak of the vices of the sailor ; but it is the temptations of the land, the sins of shore and not of ship, which have so often corrupted the hapless mariner. The influence of the seas, as such, never yet polluted an immortal spirit. The voice of the Lord is on the waters ; and never yet did the listening ear fail to hear it and the heart to bow, as it spoke.

Many of the Christian virtues are inculcated by the ocean. It teaches us industry. We are told that no portion of its waters is ever entirely idle. Look at the vicissitudes and fluctuations and ceaseless activities on the seashore, and learn that this life was given thee not for sloth, not for self-seeking and ease, not as an Eastern kahn wherein to enjoy the luxuries of sense and sink to the mere animal, but to work ; and daily, hourly, not only in the needful toils of this outward world, but for thy inward nature, thy deathless soul, to work out thy salvation.

We may learn also lessons of cheerfulness from the accustomed aspect of the deep. When a favoring sky broods on its face, how serene is the prospect. What can so raise the depressed spirit, and assure us of a beneficent Providence? How like a molten mirror it reflects the azure heavens. Its glassy surface, when unbroken by a ripple, allays our inward agitations and smooths the brow that was furrowed by undue anxieties. Look beneath that surface ; how the glad sunlight pierces down the fathomless waters ; see the sportive fish exulting beneath the riches of God's goodness. Come at eventide to the sea beach, and watch the dancing waves, as, in mirthful mood, they run their race, each impatient of his foregoer's speed, advancing and receding in turn along the clean sand-paved shore. If thou art disposed to repine and murmur, muse on the scene, and thy gloom shall depart, and thy distrust shall abate ; and the depths of thy soul shall respond to the tones of inspiration, "God is Love."

Yes, and let me here say that the ocean is both a teacher and exemplar of universal love. It is no respecter of persons, but bears on its wide-spread bosom all who ask its support. If it convey proudly onward the majestic navies of the nations, so also does it sustain the rude canoe, the humblest craft that, by sail or oar, steals along its shores. We in our narrowness of spirit, exclude from our hearts, this or that individual, here a political party, and there a persuasion in Christ. Not such is the temper of the noble ocean. Broad, generous, all-embracing, it offers itself as a pathway to every people ; it has open arms and ready havens for the most in-

significant thing that launches upon it. How liberal it is; in one sense, indeed, separating, yet in another joining and binding together all kingdoms and countries and islands in one beautiful brotherhood. To the merchants of every latitude, whether they would commit to it the metals of the South or the furs of the North; and in all longitudes, receiving the agricultural treasures of the West and the rich mechanism of the East, it extends its kindly invitations and bids all welcome. If the Scriptures decry bigotry and alienations, party feuds and sectarian bitterness, this great and wide sea, this bright testimonial of God's care for all his children, sanctions and reiterates the lesson.

Yet more, the ocean is a moral monitor; it appeals to us according to our varying spiritual conditions.

To the tempted there is a voice from the deep; for it not only embosoms myriads of happy occupants, creatures desirable to look upon, or adapted for food, but it also covers up terrific beings. They follow in the wake of our vessels; they lurk near our shores; their deadly fangs and fiery eyes and stealthy movement all say "beware." When wind and tempest are rising, then the sea-bird shrieks above and the hoarse waves murmur below and around, "beware."

And what else says this world to our exposed faith and tried virtue? Who can say he is perfectly secure in his spiritual state? Let those who trust themselves unguarded on life's perilous waters, know their danger. Every man has some tempter, mighty, it may be, in power; near, he cannot tell how near, the course he is to-day taking. It may be unseen and insidious; or it may move even in his sight, making "the deep to boil" round him "like a pot;" making its path to shine after it. You wake at midnight, and the winds howl, the storm is raging, and you pity the mariner. Think also of yourself: fiercer winds assault your immortal nature; temptation is always nigh; look unto God; implore his deliverance; or, in the midst of life's sea, some adverse and unseen power may strike you, and mountain waves rush over you, and you go fearfully down.

But not the tempted alone, the guilty also may hear a

voice from the ocean. How expressive is the language of the prophet, "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." We cannot take up a daily newspaper which does not record the deeds of some hardened offender whom the ocean rebukes for his crime. The storm-lashed waters, and the winds, as they shriek through the shrouds, startle conscience; the red lightnings flash, as if the eye of Omniscience were piercing the very soul, and each thunder-peal is a voice of retribution, around, above, within are heard combined witnesses to the dark deed. Perhaps we take pride, as we picture the scene, in the thought of our own immaculate record. Happy for us, if in exchange of every circumstance, birth, education, early companions and mid-life associates, with some of these wretched victims, we had not equally fallen and deserved not less fearful admonitions of our own guilt.

The sea has yet other strains adapted to yet other moods of human experience. We are not only inclined in our sunny days to gladness and hope, but also subject under reverses to grief. In our sorrows God has graciously given us, in addition to the rich promises of faith in Jesus, the solace of creation. Let us go with a heavy heart to the ocean shore, and we may always find there some comforter. The influences of nature are always sweet to the troubled and tired. Nothing more soothes the spirit than, after a day of toil and perplexity and depression, to walk forth and commune with the calm heavens, the consolatory moon, the gentle stars, and the green earth. So does the sea also whisper peace to the disquieted. Visit it in a calm day, and how, as with an angel's voice, it bids you look into the face of your divine Father, and see that it is He who has ordered your lot, and will open for you a way through every difficulty and obstacle.

Nor, though the sea be agitated, swelling and surging in tumultuous movement, is it out of harmony with the tried and distressed. It seems then tossed to and fro in sympathy with their spirit. Its restlessness is in unison with their own; and they find even a pleasure amid its very commo-

tions. There are times when the deep heavings of the ocean, especially if we are not embarked upon it, accord better with our feelings, and we actually derive more enjoyment as spiritual beings from the view of them, than we could from a profound calm.

To the mourner how many plaintive notes and what affecting counsels are heard amid the elements at sea. The waters may rage around him ; but he remembers there is a Being who holds them in the hollow of his hand. Every wave, let it mount up to the very heavens, is restrained by him, and at length descends and breaks ; there is no storm but is succeeded by a calm. The same power which makes "the sleeping billows roll," makes "the rolling billows sleep." "God has taken from me," you will say, "a dear friend ; deep is calling unto deep within me ; but I cannot, I will not, permit myself to forget that in the midst of judgment he will remember mercy ; all his waves have gone over me, yet he is still my Father ; he will not afflict me beyond my powers of endurance, nor except for my immortal good."

The recent disaster to the "Metis" brings home to our imagination the constant dangers of collision between vessels, and of events which fill homes and hearts with a grief well-nigh inconsolable. There are occasions when the ocean is filled with the saddest associations. It is the tomb to how many of some loved and departed one. Perhaps he was lost by a dispensation the darker because no tidings have ever come of the fate of the vessel that bore him. Imagination is busy with terrible images of its frail timbers crushed amid floating mountains of ice, or consumed by flames, or wrecked by the fury of some gale. It may be we learned the sad doom of the lost one, and that, by wasting sickness, he breathed his last on ship-board, and his frame was consigned to the dark waters ; or by accident he fell, and was lost, even within sight, it may be, of those who could lend him no aid. Or the wreck of the ill-fated ship he sailed in has been seen, and given a bitter certainty that hope is at an end. How tenderly we then look on each wave of the sea, and would fain interrogate it, and know if it be not haply one which has

touched, in its restless course, the very form of the lamented one.

Who, indeed, can depict the large wisdom, and the varied eloquence, the gentle offices and the pathos of the ocean? Said I not truly, there is a religion of the sea? Three-fourths of the globe are covered by its waters. So does it preach from pole to pole, in every parallel, and in every zone, to mortal man. It follows the race in their widest course; no voyage but has this daily monitor throughout its length.

The life, let me now say, of every human being is imaged in the deep, and he should be instructed by its waters. Whither is life bearing us? what is the destiny of this spirit-world, richer than all outward possessions, this world within us? We are bound on a voyage of awful length: when will it terminate? Is God's spirit the wind that wafts us? Is Jesus our star and trust? Have we made the gospel our chart? Then do we know the truth of that cheering strain:

“When life's tempestuous storms are o'er,
How calm he meets the friendly shore
Who lived averse from sin.
Such peace on virtue's path attends,
That where the sinner's pleasure ends
The good man's joys begin.”

“AMONG the shepherds of Switzerland, when the pastures become scanty in the valleys, in order to induce the sheep to ascend the mountains where the herbage is sweeter and more abundant, the shepherd carries up a lamb: so doth our Father lovingly bear our lambs from the scanty herbage of earth to the ever-verdant and abundant fields of heaven, and soon we shall follow on.” Mourner, let not the veil of fear and distrust fall heavily between thee and the Good Shepherd. Trust his love: lean on his arm outstretched to bear you over the river. Love him whose tender mercies are over all his works. Wrap no dark doubt about thy soul, question not him whose protection is sure: and when he gathers the lambs of thy little flock to himself, let this thought comfort thee, — he has taken them into his everlasting fold to dwell with him forever.

CLERICAL REMINISCENCES.

CHESHIRE COUNTY, N.H.

[It is not often that we have a correspondent whose memory goes back clearly more than eighty years. The reminiscences published below relate to persons and events not widely known, nor of general interest; but we value them as giving us from a living witness glimpses of men and things as they were a little before and a little after the beginning of the present century. Some of the men not only had a decided influence and distinction in their neighborhood, but were persons of strongly marked characters. — ED.]

WHEN the writer became a resident in this County, in 1799, the Monadnock Association of Clergymen consisted of Rev. Dr. Payson, of Rindge (father of Mr. Payson, of Portland, much celebrated as an Orthodox preacher in his day), who was justly considered, from his talents and high standing, as at the head of the clergy; Rev. Laban Ainsworth, of Jaffrey, also eminent; Rev. Aaron Hall, of Keene; Rev. Gad Newell, of Nelson; Rev. Mr. Williams, of Fitzwilliam; Rev. Mr. Fish, of Marlborough, and Rev. Mr. Fish, of Gilsum (brothers); Rev. Mr. Muzzey, of Sullivan; Rev. Isaac Robinson, D.D., of Stoddard; and Rev. Mr. Lanston, of East Alstead. These have all passed away. Mr. Newell (one of whose daughters was the wife of one of the earliest missionaries to the Sandwich Islands) lived to the great age of ninety-three, and the Rev. Mr. Ainsworth to that of one hundred. Dr. Payson drew up a new Confession of Faith, which is still the rule or law in most (though probably not now in all) of the "Orthodox" Congregational churches. The articles (each with special note references to the Scriptures in support) were strictly Calvinistic, according to the Assembly's Catechism. This was the only catechism in existence, and many of the clergy were in the habit of visiting the several schools on Saturday to "catechise" the children.

At this period all the Connecticut River towns had settled ministers of the Arminian or more "liberal school" (so called); namely, Charlestown, Rev. Mr. Foster (succeeded

by the Rev. Dr. Crosby, whose half-century services were duly celebrated in 1860); Rev. Mr. Fessenden, of Walpole; Rev. Allen Pratt, of Westmoreland; Rev. Mr. Wood, of Chesterfield; and, I think, Rev. Mr. Gay, of Hinsdale: with the Rev. Mr. Howe, of Surry; Rev. Mr. Goddard, of Swanze; and Rev. Mr. Conant, of Winchester, on the Ashuelot. Also the Rev. Edward Sprague, of Dublin. The Rev. Mr. Mead, of Alstead (centre), was of this school, a man of much ability, who had shortly before either resigned the ministry, or been dismissed for "heresy." I only recollect hearing of *councils* having been called in his case. He was in the habit of furnishing the press in Keene with many amusing essays, often cutting pretty deep into doctrines he either disbelieved or could not comprehend. I recollect reading several of these essays in newspaper files, one of which began with an old lady's remark, who loved equally the minister and the good old orthodox creed,—"Forty years ago to-day since our good old Parson *Oldstaff* was ordained!" To what extent his "heresy" proceeded, I could never ascertain. His descendants are numerous and highly respected. I believe he did not again settle in the ministry; but a "*sound*" man became his successor.

Rev. Mr. Fessenden, of Walpole (father of the poet Thomas Green Fessenden, so well remembered as the author of a poem, "Terrible Tractoration," first published in London in defense of the *Tractor points*, and other poetical effusions), published a small octavo volume entitled "The Science of Sanctity."

Rev. Mr. Robinson, of Stoddard, on whom the degree of D.D. was afterwards conferred by Dartmouth, was not liberally educated, but of strong reasoning powers. He was afterwards engaged in several polemic controversies with Universalists and Unitarians. His Unitarian antagonist was the Rev. T. R. Sullivan, who was settled over the Unitarian society in Keene, December, 1825. Several pamphlets on each side were published. He was a great proficient in the Hebrew language, and is said to have ever committed his sermons to memory, for he used no notes. He was called

from his work in the field (for he was a farmer as well as a minister) to preach the funeral sermon of Rev. Dr. Payson, of Rindge, some twenty miles distant; and it is said he had not committed a word to writing, but composed the discourse on horse-back over the hills and valleys that intervened on his way to the funeral. This habit of committing to memory made his delivery peculiar. His voice was uniform in cadence. He had no gestures beyond the necessary movement of the body, which, after naming his text, moved gradually to the extreme right and as gradually to the front and round to the extreme left, and so right and left to the close. The inference, as he apparently saw no individual of the audience, was drawn that he was entirely absorbed in recollecting every link in the *chain* of his argument. His influence, with the high respects for his talents entertained, was conclusive in all matters of doctrine and morals.*

Some of the modern tests of Orthodoxy — and until after Dr. Morse's review of an English pamphlet on "American Unitarianism," about the year 1812 — were not specially insisted on. The great subjects of controversy were the *five points* of Calvinism and some new views by Dr. Hopkins. These were combated by the Arminian clergy, who afterwards very generally, in Massachusetts, favored, if they did not embrace, the views of the Unitarians. About the year 1810 or 1812 I recollect asking the widow of a deceased Arminian clergyman, well remembered in my younger days, what his views were of the doctrine of the Trinity. "Oh," said she, "they were all Trinitarians then." On reading many of that clergyman's manuscript sermons afterwards, from 1770 to 1803 (with several of his printed discourses, one was on "The Faithfulness of God," as opposed to decrees and foreordination), I occasionally found the Trinity and atonement recognized, but nowhere stated as doctrines

* One of the Germans taken prisoner at Bennington battle settled in Stoddard. He was once inquired of, it may be by a doubter, what he thought of certain views brought forward in the pulpit. His reply was, "I think just as Mr. Robinson thinks."

necessary to be believed for salvation. And this, I am apprehensive, is now the prevailing view in the great and growing Methodist denomination. Their manual does recognize the doctrines of the Trinity and Atonement; but having more generally attended the services in that denomination for several years, with four or five successive local preachers, I have never heard these doctrines referred to as *tests* of Christian belief. Their discourses are practical, for the most part, enforcing the Christian precepts and example; believing that the gifts of God were commensurable, in moral ability, with his requirements. Indeed each individually has expressed his reliance on Christian conduct and character as the great satisfactory tests.

Rev. Mr. Howe, of Surry, of the Arminian class of preachers, was the first to publicly avow himself as a believer in the Unitarian doctrine. He was a member of the council that ordained Rev. Mr. Sullivan, of Keene, in 1825, and was truly a most worthy and exemplary man.

At the period designated, two years before this century commenced (1799), there were of Congregational dissenters a small society of Friends (Quakers) in Richmond, a Baptist society in East Westmoreland, and another in the northern portion of Dublin, only. There were itinerant Universalist preachers, but no established parishes. Rev. Hosea Ballou, founder of the class who believe the deserts of sin are experienced in this life only, was a native of Richmond; and Rev. Elhanan Winchester, who held stoutly to future accountability, but in the final restoration of all, spent much time in Westmoreland, where he had some strong supporters. Both were eminent writers in their times. The former published the first treatise against the Orthodox doctrine of the atonement, and the latter two octavo volumes on the prophecies. At that period, and until the year 1819, the clergy were supported by a town tax, every individual contributing his proportion, as in that for town, county, and school taxes. No town, with the exceptions referred to, had more than one minister, and these all of the Congregational order. Their salaries were at a very low ebb, — none exceeding thirty

pounds lawful money, or about three hundred and sixty dollars. As dissenting societies increased, individuals showing their adherence to and contributing to the support of such societies were relieved from taxation. In 1819, the courts troubled with suits, the Legislature passed an act relieving every individual from a religious tax, making everything voluntary. But they provided for voluntary religious societies by giving public notice, making all the members of such accountable, as in other corporations, so long as each chose to continue his membership. Many feared the saddest effects would result: but instead, 'here is scarcely a town that has not now two, three, and up to six and seven, religious societies, of different denominations, with churches erected. Keene has seven, including a large Roman Catholic society and church.

Rev. Mr. Hall, of Keene, died in 1814. During his ministry the town was united as one society. He was of respectable talents and highly esteemed. One of his daughters, Mrs. Parker, much beloved, is still living at the advanced age of eighty-nine. In 1815 he was succeeded in the ministry by Rev. Mr. Oliphant, afterwards settled at Beverly (still living), and in 1818 by Rev. Z. S. Barstow, D.D., who was relieved in 1868, having completed half a century of faithful services.

In the year 1805 the writer proceeded some twelve miles to attend an ordination at Fitzwilliam. The Rev. John Sabin had received a call to settle there. Ordinations in those days were more rare (and enjoyed especially by young people) than in long succeeding years, when the venerable Mr. Ainsworth was wont to say, "Nowadays it becomes a minister to have his horse harnessed and his wagon at the door to be ready to seek another parish." We waited for the summons to go to the church until nearly the close of the day, and then learned that the council (mostly of the members of the association) had declined to give Mr. Sabin ordination. Some members of the church were not satisfied of his being "dox" (as the unlearned sometimes shortened the precious word), and Deacon —— was sure he was leaning towards

Universalism.* Dissatisfied with this result a majority of the church, with good unanimity in the parish, called another council, principally from Massachusetts, among whom were Rev. Francis Gardner, of Leominster, Rev. Dr. Thayer, of Lancaster, Rev. Mr. ———, of Gardner, and others, and Mr. Sabin was ordained. But he was at once cut off from surrounding ministerial exchanges generally, and his situation necessarily became very unpleasant for some years. A few years after his ordination the church in Fitzwilliam took fire by lightning, and was burned down, and Mr. Sabin was delegated to visit Boston and solicit funds for rebuilding. He called on the Rev. Mr. Holley, of the Hollis Street Church, who invited him to preach. With great reluctance he consented; for the contrast in elocution and manner, even with his good cause, he feared would be displeasing. Mr. Holley preached in the afternoon, and the society contributed to the object. Afterwards, however, he was taken into fellowship by the Monadnock Association, he becoming "Evangelical;" and the seceders in the church and society, dissatisfied, eventually settled a Unitarian clergyman, retaining the new house of worship.

These sketches might never have been penned but from vivid recollections of the eccentric Dublin minister, Rev. Edward Sprague, of more general notoriety, for a long term of years, in this region of country, than perhaps any other individual. He was a son of Dr. John Sprague, of Boston, — who in after years removed to Dedham, — graduated at Harvard, in 1770, and was settled in Dublin, in November, 1777, President Langdon, of Harvard College, preaching the sermon. The salary of Mr. Sprague was fixed at sixty pounds, or two hundred dollars, with a settlement, so called, of about the amount of one year's pay, — a kind of *setting*

* A good woman in those *catching days* once came home from her meeting indignant that her minister had permitted a Universalist to preach for him. "You are mistaken," said a friend: "he is one of our truest men, — I know him well." "Is he? Well, I'm sure he *used Universal words*."

out in life as was usual in those days. But the depreciation of revolutionary paper had rendered the salary nearly worthless, so that in 1780, instead, the town voted Mr. Sprague "two hundred bushels of rye, or the value thereof in beef, pork, Indian corn, butter, wool, flax," or other acceptable articles. The pay generally allowed to ministers in the country for *preaching the gospel* ranged from sixty to eighty pounds, with a "settlement."* But on or about the year 1797, Mr. Sprague having inherited, by his father's death, a "fortune," in those days (some thirty thousand dollars or more), he proposed to relinquish his salary, but still to retain his pastoral relation, and to supply the pulpit at his own expense (when unable himself to perform the duties) "with men of piety and good ability, — which proposition was accepted, relieving the town from any ministerial tax until his death, in December, 1817. He desired not to be confined to Dublin, as his physician had advised changes of air and situation; and yet he seldom was absent, until at a much later period he purchased a house in Keene, and occasionally resided there, visiting his wife, an estimable woman, who had there been permanently settled.

Mr. Sprague's religious views were decidedly of the Arminian cast, but he was surrounded exclusively by brethren of the Calvinistic school, until about the year 1800, when Rev. Mr. Dunbar was settled in Peterborough, adjoining. I had often heard of his peculiarities of character, and "the thousand anecdotes related of him," — some true, and others of only imaginary foundation. Some of them would seem to show weakness and ignorance, — for he had little or no knowledge of country life, — while others, as the historian of Dublin observes, "showed him to have possessed in a marked degree the qualities of shrewdness and sharpness of intellect;

* So early as 1804 I remember Major Russell, of the Boston Conlinal, complimented the town of Keene for their liberality in raising their minister's salary to five hundred dollars. A successor in the old church, installed in 1869, receives a salary of two thousand dollars, with a handsome parsonage.

and in the encounter of wits with his clerical brethren, not unusual in those days, his opponents were quite as likely as himself to come off second best." These encounters were frequent; for though his orthodox brethren might affect lightly to esteem his intellect, their visits were frequent. He was "social and jovial," fond of anecdote and "good cheer," and hospitably entertained all who called on him. He was "not given to close application in his professional studies. He was solemn in the pulpit; his sermons generally practical, without much originality of thought, written so ineligibly that few if any could decipher them." In his latter years he did not seem to depend upon his notes at all. The walls of his audience chamber were nearly covered with views, portraits, and engravings, mostly rude and indifferent, which he called his *museum*.

In 1802 I visited him with one of his old college acquaintances, also a clergyman. At this period Mr. Sprague had become very corpulent. His house was nearly on the highest ridge of land dividing the waters running into the Connecticut and the Merrimac. It was up hill or down on every road or path; and being now "in funds," he purchased a heavy coach, requiring four horses, to aid him in his visits at home and abroad. He had walked down to the *village*, the store and three or four houses, some two hundred rods, in company with Rev. Mr. Dunbar, who had shortly before been settled at Peterborough. At length they were soon slowly returning; but on rising the hill it became necessary to stop once in every few rods to give Mr. Sprague breath and strength to proceed. Mr. Dunbar was ever an intimate friend; for they had no discordant religious views, and their visits were very frequent. A large portion of the original settlers in Peterborough were Scotch Irish, men of superior intellect, and their late unpopular minister, who had been dismissed, was a Presbyterian. While Mr. Dunbar was preaching, as the more generally popular candidate, Mr. Sprague visited Peterborough. He found the "old school" members of the parish much excited. They came around him with their troubles and complaints. "Why, what is the

difficulty?" said Mr. Sprague. Their great grievance was unfolded. "What shall we do, Mr. Sprague, with this Mr. Dun-bar, he preaches nothing but *works, works, works?*" "Is that all? Why, you will come to no hurt, you may be assured," replied Mr. Sprague; "*for never did a people more need just such preaching!*" Mr. Dunbar preached the funeral sermon on the death of his friend, 1817. The late Rev. Abiel Abott, D.D., much beloved, a victim of consociated action in Connecticut, succeeded Mr. Dunbar.

Of the Calvinistic clergymen who most frequently visited Mr. Sprague were Rev. Dr. Payson* and Rev. Mr. Ainsworth, the latter's residence being near. However pleasant were these interviews,—for Mr. Sprague often invited Mr. Ainsworth to ride with him,—they seldom if ever separated without some *hard hits*, Arminius and Whitby on one side, and Calvin and Edwards on the other. Mr. Ainsworth stood high in the profession, and no doubt felt his superiority. On one occasion, as they were descending a hill, Mr. Sprague's man gave his horses the reins, and Mr. Ainsworth became exceedingly alarmed: "Why, Mr. Sprague, do speak to your man; we shall surely, at this rate, be *smashed!*" "Oh, don't be troubled, brother Ainsworth; you know that if it were so *decreed*, according to your doctrine, we *shall* be *smashed*, and all our care will avail us nothing!" On another occasion, several of his brother ministers visiting him, the question was debated among them whether there ever was, in reality, any such thing as *disinterested benevolence*. Mr. Sprague had silently heard them, when he was called on to give his opinion. "Disinterested benevolence! not a doubt need be en-

* The Doctor on one occasion was not a little troubled. A printer about to publish an edition of the New Testament obtained his consent to examine the sheets before going to press. He did so. The first impression is technically called "the proof sheet;" the second, "the revise." This last the Doctor examined. What was his surprise when a copy was sent him to find put in the titlepage, after "The New Testament," &c., "Revised and corrected by Rev. Seth Payson, D.D.!" Only a small part of the edition, however, had been published before a more fitting recommendation of the edition was substituted.

tertained, and I can demonstrate it by a single reference. Here is my Brother Ainsworth: he has been preaching these twenty years or more to Jaffrey people; he never did them any good by his kind of preaching, and yet they continue to pay him his salary from year to year. If this is not disinterested benevolence, where on earth can we find it?" Mr. Ainsworth probably owed him one, and we shall next see what success he had in paying the debt. On another occasion Dr. Adams, of Keene, and Dr. Nathan Smith, of Hanover, called on Mr. Sprague. Mr. Ainsworth being present, and acquainted with Dr. Smith, says to him, "Shall I introduce to you *Daddy Sprague*?" Mr. Sprague apparently took no notice of the manner, but said, "I am happy to see you, sir: I have often heard of you as an eminent surgeon;" and putting his hand on Mr. Ainsworth's shoulder said, "I have a foolish fellow here, and I want you to trepan him: take out two ounces of his brains, and put in a little common sense and decency."

"In some respects," says the historian of Dublin, "Mr. Sprague had the simplicity of a child, while many a one, strong in his own power, in a contest of wit found himself defeated in an encounter." His house was always open, and his table plentifully supplied with the best he could obtain. He providently, as he thought, invested much of his money in farms to let at the halves; but somehow the farms depreciated in value, and he was often heard to say, "My half didn't grow." With age his infirmities increased. His death was caused by the overturning of his carriage, having a limb broken, on returning from a wedding. The limb did not unite, and mortification ensued. On being assured of the event which must soon occur, he took the proper measures, and dictated his will.

The will, which was duly established, gave "the town of Dublin the sum of five thousand dollars, to be kept at interest forever, for the purpose of supporting the Christian religion in the Congregational society," &c., "to be paid quarterly to the minister of the *Congregational persuasion* who shall be regularly ordained." After sundry other bequests,

with ample provision for his widow, — having no children, — all the remainder of his estate was given to the town, “for the *use of schooling* in said Dublin.” The school fund, mostly derived from Mr. Sprague’s bequest, amounts now to about eleven thousand dollars.

Ten years after Mr. Sprague’s death a few families, disaffected with the deceased’s successor, having seceded from the old society, had formed a church, and held public services with the usual orthodox confession of faith. The new society were invited to occupy the meeting-house to the full extent of their numbers, and the town hall at other times. But in 1855, or later (the year not recollected), a suit was instituted by the new society (instigated, as many believed, by outside influence) to recover and *exclusively* appropriate the whole of the Sprague ministerial fund! As the interest for some forty years of the fund would be included in a verdict for the plaintiffs, the affair became a very serious matter; very *unpleasant* in one case, and, as it terminated, no less so, with a heavy bill of cost, in the other. The ground relied on was, that Mr. Sprague was settled as an *Orthodox* minister, and that the fund was used to support a successor who was *not* Orthodox. The testimony, however, taken before commissioners, of clergymen and others well acquainted with Mr. Sprague’s views, failed to satisfy the court. Eventually that body decided unanimously against changing the provisions of the will. Chief-Justice Perley drew up and read the opinion of the court,—a very able paper, which was published,—before a large assembly, in the court house at Keene.

Rev. Levi W. Leonard, the successor of Mr. Sprague, was ordained in 1820, Rev. Dr. Ware, Sen., of Cambridge, preaching the sermon. For more than a quarter of a century he was the much beloved pastor of the church and society. Himself a ripe scholar and author of several very valuable school books, he had *a way* with the young, as well as with the old, which was indefatigably improved: first, in a child’s library of his own, calling the children to his room; secondly, in common school reform; thirdly, in new and better arranged school-houses; and, again, he was the first to bring about,

with a few able assistants, a great desideratum,—the Institute for the better Preparation of Common School Instructors; from which, first the county, and then the State, have received so much benefit. In view of these great services, a Dartmouth professor justly pronounced him "The Oberlin of Cheshire County." He was also an extensive correspondent of the press, at Keene, on moral and educational subjects. Without any show of oratory, his sermons were very generally practical, and always convincing in their conclusions.

Dublin, a small ridge town, of farmers, has sent forth eminent men in the various professions. I now recollect three or four living clergymen, two at least of the law, and two physicians and surgeons, of whom was Dr. Amos Twichell, of Keene, whose fame as a surgeon commanded wide and extensive calls. The late Dr. Morse, of Walpole, also eminent, was a native of Dublin, as well as Daniel Eliot, of New York, bred a physician, but who led an honorable mercantile life, of sterling talents and integrity, commanding the fullest confidence and the highest respect of a host of attached friends. Several families of the Appletons (brothers of Samuel and Nathan, of Boston,) were residents of Dublin.

J. P.

We know that all our peace
Is bought by strife;
That every haven of rest
Lies o'er a billowy life.

We know that darkest hours
Precede the light;
That anchors, sure and firm,
Are out of sight.

PHILIP FANCIFUL'S WHIMS.

BY W. E. A.

ODD fancies germinate in imaginative brains ; odd, because the law of association seems suspended : results alone become apparent, the occasion evanescent, inadequate, or not traceable ; a few detached links in the chain of association appear, but hang upon nothing, support nothing. As lightning in a summer evening, they glitter in a serene horizon, dart, crinkle and spread, without aim or object, vanishing without noise, or a trace upon the sky.

Again, impressions apparently causeless, by reiteration, become realities. Good sense may smile at me, as a visionary who lives on trifles, light as air, viewless, and as little tangible to the senses. If so, I must plead guilty. For there is in every *name* a special somewhat, which, in a degree, influences our very nature ; since I cannot recall the time when destitute of a sort of "second sight," in respect to persons, thoughts, objects falling under observation. All men have such thoughts, "whims," differing with different individualities ; sometimes running out into labyrinths of visionary speculation ; their nature dependent upon refinement and individual habits of thinking.

But it is not so common to find inanimate objects interestingly suggestive, apart from and beyond their natural uses. Few men have time to observe, reflect, or speculate, aside from business : to pause upon trifles, while their minds are occupied or harassed by affairs of importance. They scarcely regard the ground, sliding under their feet, as they stride ; the houses they pass with a glance ; the streets, pavements, posts as fixed facts ; avoiding them by instinct, without conscious thought or memory. To them a post *is* a post, — nothing but a post ; a rough, irregular mass of mindless matter, unit among millions and unworthy of a glance. Its nature is determined by its qualities, duties, rights, warnings, and resentments. Glances tell all, or it is intuition, too rapid

for distinct vision or comprehension. Mist conceals while it reveals, leaving a gleam, a shadow on the retina, for passive intellect to snatch or miss. To observe accurately tense volition is essential, a determined will to see all that can be seen, in all aspects and in every relation. Seen, realized, exactly defined, a post even is occasionally somewhat more than is conceded by the unobservant crowd. Notable exceptions to the blockhead million about us have aspirations after comeliness or decoration of person ; intellectual, moral, spiritual graces (why not ?) would arise from an inane destiny of soulless matter, to semblance at least of human attributes and the human form and expression.

This idea may be better understood and therefore acknowledged by a striking example, where the same principle is involved, evidently undeniable. For are we not overwhelmed with wondering surprise, when for the first time, instantly, unexpectedly, this fact, in solemn grandeur, awful presence, gigantic personality, deeps of moral, intellectual, and spiritual power, makes itself known in the exhibition of a grand accidental portraiture of "the Old Man of the Mountain?" Soul, intellect, heart, are at once chaotic! Feeling with feeling, conscience with sentiment, the sublime with the beautiful, the vast with the minute conflict, until we cannot tell, or feel, if we are indeed in, or out of the body ; on earth, or in heaven, so great, absorbing, so human, divine, our impressions and conceptions. Time lingers silent, unheeded by, lays his cold palm on our bewildered brows : quiets, re-arranges our thoughts, poises anew our intellects, uplifts our souls, recalls unawares our daily life, when at length the miracle dissolves in fact, explanation and silence. We gaze in awe and admiration, overshadowed by the grand idea, realized in the rocks before us, as we trace on distant heights, a colossal human bust, the impersonation of the Deity in abstract contemplation of the beautiful sublime, above, beneath, around him and within !

It is little to us that with a change of locality the illusion vanishes. We stand aghast at toppling ruins lying around : our poetry has become saddest prose, and like young children

we sigh in tears over the wreck of beautiful, frail, dear toys ! But, to return upon our steps is to re-create. These rocks, immovable on their bases, are eternal by the fiat of God. Creation in destruction awaits the doubting, despondent heart, the regretful spirit. Each rock from its isolated solitude, miles apart, by fickle but almighty volition, changing relations by change of place, draws to his fellow-rock with the creative energy, polarity, grasp, cohesion, which cemented its individual parts at the creation of the world ! As we wind along by Nature's grand and beautiful paths, one by one, the features appear, start forth into perfect harmony of outline and contour, man-like, God-like ; a thought and act of God !

Unconscious of our rapture, disappointment, diminutive forms are they, wrapt forever in the solemnity of profoundest thought, unconscious of the resultant expression of sublimest conceptions. Yet, eloquent as they are, in majesty, solidity, and power in repose, we wonder more at the plenitude of plastic art, intellect, force, which has upheaved, poised, fixed forever on its pedestal a weight too ponderous for human management, too massive for human estimates, too wonderful in resources for human grasp or penetration, too comprehensive for human intellect, too subtle for spiritual glance ; and bow in prostrate humility, wonder, and love, to worship and adore the living, loving, All-Powerful God !

A like Almighty skill, with finger-tips, traces femininely, in delicate but legible characters omnipresent in nature, remarkable coincidences, orphic wisdom and sportive meaning for intellect, heart and soul of man. We are surprised, instructed, delighted with their suggestions, heedless of their origin, in pleasant dreams, which we indulge without doubt or regret. In playful spirit is it seen descending to low human levels to trifle with the trifler, reiterate and point its jest, curling the lip oft in mirth or scorn.

To return from a long, but not needless digression, let us consider a familiar example. In my daily walk "down town" by Alderman Jones's neglected but comfortable residence, I am accustomed to notice always in a certain post, Jones's accidental "double," eidolon, call it what you will, lolling lazily

by the fence and looking about him for news, a little air, sunshine. Some years have I met him daily, early and late, in storm and fair weather, the very same, inevitable, distinctive image of Jones within doors, — fixed, stolid, indisputable fact. Indeed, he seems to have adopted him, as an ideal of what a post strives to become, or at least portray for the benefit and admiration of mankind.

Observe attentively, *scrutinize*, a rather short cedar-post, large, of a flaxen color, the summit rounded, a little broomed or fringed, from long exposure to weather ; the head knobby and wrinkled, trunk somewhat bulging, while, at the foot, is an expression, as if gouty shoes were inch by inch and painfully hobbling down the street. Lo, thus old Jeremiah Jones, alderman, fence-viewer, and hog-reeve, factor of soap and candles, long since retired from business. For he likewise is short, stout, and of a flaxen color withal, the frill of fringy, gray hair matching the ashen color of his skin, and the constant suit of light drab cloth, donned from necessity in his collections about town, for business purposes. The fat, flabby, irregular visage, composed apparently of equal parts of soap-grease and ashes, blank and inexpressive, are well enough represented in knobs and crevices and undulating substance of his woody counterpart. Jeremiah is likewise corpulent, unusually rotund, measuring more about the waist than his tailor thinks quite fair, or easy to girth with his parchment scale ; his pantaloons, (or rather, "trowsiz," he is not genteel enough even for "pants") give no idea of the manner of man he is under their voluminous folds. Gout is not wanting to the parallel. For as the waist expands in nether integuments the upholding limbs waste away unawares, swelling again into large, puffy feet. In several senses has he gathered substance with gathering years, lived on the fat of the land quite too long not to have arrived at the honors or horrors of a digital martyrdom. There is a circumstance which, in passing, I forgot to mention, a "je ne sais quoi," imitating the fleshly J. as he lifts broad skirts, stuffed with portentous pocket-book, gloves, and bandanna, — upon an arm carried around behind him for equipoise, to the stoop of declining years, of

which feeble limbs and bending staff have already begun to complain. Be assured, "the likeness is very good," *so* good indeed that it would not surprise me much if I were absently to take cedar's hand by mistake for Jones's could he ever be induced to let go the aforesaid ample skirts and cane.

It is not my intention to indite a catalogue of timbered blockheads, which happen to represent or caricature by some remarkable temperament the characteristics corporeal, moral, intellectual or spiritual of friends, or eminent strangers long since gone to impalpable dust! They are fresh in memory, occupying places of distinction in society, some of them on the bench, at the bar, in the chair of state, not regardless of poor pitiable mortals not beneath nor beyond the accident of a portrait, or a little harmless fun. Posts are too upright, nay stiff, to modify or veil opinions for any differences of persons, conditions, feelings, whatever; true as its shadow to the sun on the dial-plate.

If posts have suggested tolerable representations of personal form, figure and feature, be not incredulous when I talk of friends in trees, who welcome me to their agreeable society as I look out upon the landscape from my north window. Many hours have passed among these impersonations of familiar forms and dearer souls! They belong to the past and the present, the living and the dead. And if diversities of endowment, education, character, be taken into account, they mingle in a coterie of cordial acquaintance, old friends of a lifetime. Their drawing-room is spacious, but not less amply spreads velvet or tapestry at their feet; the ceiling lofty, but the inmates are of truly colossal stature, holding their heads very high. Curtains float at large, of gauzy drapery, admitting sifting, gorgeous, or mellow light; or slide close shutters, as "comes still evening on," for darkness, home and sweet repose. "There is no speech nor language, their voices are never heard;" but intuition is more rapid than "winged words," or thought. They do not move about the apartment, but no other relative position would suit them all as well; for the grouping is admirable. They defer to the modes and etiquettes in vogue. For though theirs is a circle of "exclu-

sives," rarely admitting a stranger, self-respect, nevertheless, maintains a due regard for public opinion, in all matters of external and social propriety, which so successfully and constantly contributes to a best effect. Change of season is sure to bring out new, beautiful and fashionable dresses, fitted tightly to the figures or with "more spread," trimmed with narrow, quilted, or plaited green: a month later with a profusion of flowers and in full dress, with gorgeous jewelry of pendant fruit. Plain garbs of summer-wear give place to splendid attire, "changeable," with all the hues of the iris, to bask and glitter in autumnal light, or faded and worn, to be cast off with shame and disgust; until at length, a shortening darkened day recalls a purer taste in a *new* and reigning fashion, adapted especially to seasons of retirement and cool reflection, at times, sparkling with diamond, amethyst, and topaz, as noon assembles the jovial party, or in spotless loveliness the moonlight congeniality pervades the circle, drawing into union all diversities of character and disposition. Each tree may have objects for special, personal attention, but the beautiful whole is not sacrificed, but enhanced by variety in its constituent elements.

At a more northerly point of the landscape, apart from their immediate circle of friends, observe a large sycamore and elm whose branches mingle without interference. They match well in size and figure, so intimately connected with each other, absorbed in mutual welfare, that a nearer and dearer relation subsists between them than we are accustomed to associate with any objects of inanimate nature. A group or traveller would be struck with their evident conjugal relationship, and, if genial leave benisons on their serene felicity. Are they an arborary embodiment of my dear departed friends, the Ms. ever in mind, as I pass with a sigh of tender recollection and painful regret? Is there nothing in the coincidence but accident without significance? Or has it spiritual meaning for heart and soul?

I must here record among "Whims" a more tangible *fact* not less remarkable than any vagary of the imagination. A few large trees near the centre of a long narrow grove of elm

and oak opposite my house, united in producing a large profile head perfect as could be well imagined. Erect and poised in impressive dignity, large features were well defined, and the whole contour of the bust in harmonious proportion. Nose and chin were well-formed, firm and intellectual. Nor was the eye wanting or out of place, but large, well-opened, and bright. In a favorable breeze at times, the mouth would move the lips in mute responses to its whispers. It was a fair, immense medallion of Liberty on our late copper-coin years ago ; the band of inscription even was hinted on a tuft of exuberant foliage on the forehead. Nor was this phenomenon a fleeting fancy or distant approximation, wanting in essential particulars, but plain to strangers or readily admitted when pointed out. No axe, ladder, or pruning-hook dared to meddle with it, to improve its mould of form, suggestive coincidence and mute oracles. Deity drew it from misty realms of spirit, gave it intellect, heart, and soul in human form, beauty, sublimity, density, vastness, solidity of substance, held it up to the gaze of admiring mortals, as a toy to young, joyous children ; then withdrew it, with many a backward glance of regret, for deposit with Nature's jewelry, for imperishable memory. We loved it ; still remember it as a dear and honored presence in heart and home, not less real because invisible. It returned annually with rounded beauty and smiles of love for summer greetings and kindly visit ; to leave us sadder, as autumn waned, with haggard look, to conceal a nude skeleton of regal majesty and manly beauty in a shroud of snow, leaving few traces of a natural curiosity as noteworthy in its way as the "Profile Mountain of the American Alps." A fine sunset in June even now faintly renews to the eye the image in parts, by aid of memory and imagination ; awakening poignant regrets for the loss of so remarkable a feature in the foreground of a beautiful landscape.

Among the surprising or attractive fancies, beauties, sublimities of Nature's efforts at loveliness, grandeur, power, trifles are not to be regarded as destitute either of meaning or potential value. Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as a trifle. It is a misnomer, savoring not a little of blasphemy.

Misnomer, when it attributes *nothingness* to mere littleness! For if a trifle, so called, be *essential* to the use, success, beauty of anything in nature art or taste, so that *without* that complement it cannot fulfill its purpose (the larger part being itself but a *complement* of the smaller, however minute comparatively), it is of necessity equal to it *in importance* relatively, regardless of its diminutive size. It is the *complete-ment*, keystone, which confers full fact and value on the congregated whole, and on each distinct part, and in that light, the equal of all the rest put together. Thus, the navigation of the world is essentially dependent upon the fine acumination which supports without appreciable friction, in the most perfect freedom of equipoise and voluntary motion, the magnetic needle of the "Mariner's Compass." Without that infinitesimal, but essential complement of acute attenuation, expensive boxes were mere rubbish, and ships at the mercy of wind, wave, and current on the ocean! Chemists work in the dark with indivisible atoms! Lenses reveal to naturalist and astronomer the minute and immense in the universe, otherwise withheld from sight. Shall we not then deem it blasphemy, in a measure to scorn or sneer at what Deity has not scorned to create perfect and innumerable? *Can* there be trifles to an Omniscient, All-Present, Almighty Will, "dwelling in eternity?"

I cannot arrogate infinitude or much consequence even for the trifles I am to exhibit; but would invite attention to a duplicity of aspect and meaning so common as to be unobserved. All things should be regarded as invested with this power, not only in addition to, but apart from, their uses and character. For we find affinities the most incongruous, expressing very grotesque, unaccountable contradictions and agreements as well. It is the acute needle of spiritual insight, which enables the eye to collect and impale these ideal ephemera for examination and future reference. These "cabinets of curiosities," gatherings of uninterrupted, endless leisure, may be extensive enough to be termed "*Personal*, if not *Real Estate*," for the fruitful family connection of "The Fancifuls;" quietly, not obnoxiously enjoyed as a "life estate,"

leaving no "bone of contention" to penniless heirs. Doubtless our shadowy progenitor, endowed with spiritual attributes alone, though like the cherubim, "with eyes in every part," denied altitude, pingnitude, solidity of humanity, laid up large possessions of this kind of wealth, a natural product of earth, sea, and sky, by habits of observation and thrift without other thought or motive than mere selfish avarice. Regard may have been had to the outward needs of a refined spiritual essence, and also for the development of a symmetrical ideal, which, however it may vanish at rude contact with flesh, by the terms of its existence is immortal in all its kindred, as shown by trick of his smile or gait. Should readers claim descent spiritually from my queer ancestor, they may like to handle a few of his curiosities in lieu of "cash (*not*) received."

Houses become human, animal, or inanimate objects of wholly different aspect and use, viewed from one particular stand-point, not otherwise. This one yawns sleepily from an open door. That, in bed furniture, airing at a chamber window, is a village clown executing his most deplorable grimace! A farm-house, two storied in front, and but one in the rear, with gambrel-roof and twin chimnies, is a snail. Others resemble a fly-cage, or a base-drum. Rocks offer us puddings, pies, loaves of bread! A bell-tower and spire stand at an angle of a church. Is it a respectable gentleman of unearthly stature in cloak and steeple-crowned hat, breasting a stiff nor-wester as he turns the corner?

Carriages personate animals. The open barouche is a serpent's head; the top thrown back, a lifted upper jaw; the reins in the driver's hand, a forked tongue. A wall is "a snake in the grass," or a string of beads flung on a bureau. We come to a long, large, roundish rock in an open pasture under a tree, an oak butt lying beside it. Do you recognize Bruin, of the old spelling-book, nosing his *dead* victim, unpleasantly, breathing fearful suspicions and intentions into his ears, *his life* saved only by a good, resolute sham?

Thus is it, as I drive about town, or tilt pensively in my rocker at a favorite window, that the gnarling peculiarities of

my origin and education among the Fancifuls, open both eyes to much that is interesting, if not *very* instructive, or profound, withal. I cultivate this sort of deuteroscopy a little, not of set purpose, but woo rather than repel these sprites in my path. There is gain in it from harmless amusement, with no loss in plain, good sense for business, or petty cares of daily life. Puck and Ariel vanish, as I check Rory for interviews with the men of sirloins, dry goods and groceries; or call on my legal adviser for special drafts upon his musty slippery learning and sharp wits. For it is only in the entire absence of engrossing thought that these provoking little burglars can break into a vacant brain, bar all ingress to the lawful proprietor, toss my newly *minted* thought and *golden time* out of the window, and search every nook, corner and cupboard for plunder or *food*, for mischievous fun or lawless theft.

WILFULNESS AND HUMILITY..

BY THE EDITOR.

THE ruler of a little province surrounded by hostile tribes casts off his allegiance to the empire of which his province is a part, and would maintain his authority alone, acknowledging no superior, and reigning in his own strength. He maintains an unequal contest with foreign and domestic enemies. But at length, harassed and broken, his resources exhausted, his spirits subdued, fearing lest he should become the prey of foes too numerous and too powerful for him, he acknowledges his offence and throws himself on the mercy of his government; and now, his little province, lacerated, enfeebled and despised, is armed with the majesty and strength of a mighty empire. So we, in our wilfulness, sometimes set up an authority at war with the laws of God, and practically renounce our allagience to him. And then all the higher influences of the universe are against us. We substitute our wishes for the will of God. By our pride we rebel against his laws and the beneficent order of his providence; and all these things turn against us. In spite of the tremendous efforts of wilful energy that we put forth, we are more and more encompassed by dangers, bowed down by infirmities, and

worn out by continual exertions. We see the hopelessness of our condition, and giving up our wilfulness and pride, throw ourselves upon God's mercy with a childlike trust resigning ourselves to him. Then his purposes become ours, and in renouncing ourselves we are clothed with the authority of the Most High. We are no longer isolated beings, building up our own schemes, but his agents, going forth in his strength and exercising our powers in harmony with his. Thus when with a true humility we give up our personal wishes to him, the shield of the Almighty is thrown over us, and his strength is made perfect in our weakness.

THE CHRISTMAS-TREE.

FROM THE GERMAN OF W. WACKERNAGEL.

DOST thou ask me, O my darling !
What the Christmas-tree doth mean ?
'Tis a dream of fragrant spring time,
In mid-winter, fresh and green.

But interpretation higher
Of its meaning thou shalt know ;
Once, in Bethlehem's fair city,
Many hundred years ago,

Sprang a shoot, enwrapped in silence,
Underneath a star-lit sky ;
Now above a world its branches
Spread a lofty roof on high.

Rich in fruit and kindly shelter,
In triumphant splendor dressed,
Christendom, that mighty tree, is
By this Christmas-tree expressed.

Lovingly we'll stand together
Underneath them both, my dear ;
While we dream a higher spring-time
Sweetly breathes around us here.

S. C. R.

TOPICS OF THE MONTH.

BY THE EDITOR.

HORACE GREELEY.

THERE is something almost appalling in the time and circumstances of Mr. Greeley's death. Less than a month ago he was held up as with a single exception the foremost man among all the forty millions of people in this land. Even then dark shadows were hanging over him. After long-continued watchfulness by a sick wife he was bowed down by the great sorrow which his death occasioned. Next came the overwhelming defeat which destroyed forever the dearly cherished political hopes and ambition of a life-time. The strain was too terrible. His sensitive nervous organization gave way with a violence which indicated to some extent how strong a man he was, and then death mercifully came to set him free. From a life which was vehemently associated with the most stirring life of a whole people, mixing itself up as an exciting cause with their warmest impulses and passions, through heavy domestic sorrows and a violent disease, this most active and living of men has, in one short month, gone into the silent and passionless realms of death.

It is hardly the time now for elaborate discrimination, and still less for indiscriminate eulogy or censure. Mr. Greeley was above all things else a living man. His whole nature, and there was a great deal of it, was alive. And he was alive in every direction. He was intensely human, and all human interests appealed to him with peculiar force. His impulses were always on the side of humanity. He had an innate passion for freedom. Laws, social institutions, customs, habits of thought which took from the political, social, or individual freedom of man, were from first to last opposed by him with all the strength of his impulsive and powerful nature. However it may have seemed at times, there was for him no discharge in that warfare. He was a man of universal benevo-

lence. But his sympathies warmed especially towards the laboring classes. He identified himself with them. His great influence and success in life grew out of his efforts for their elevation and improvement. His temperance doctrines, his anti-slavery views, his ideas of protection to domestic industry, his tendency at one time to communism, his religious faith, were all the natural products of his large and generous sympathies with the great masses of men. In that field and for that cause, the strength, the enthusiasm, the thought, and the almost fearful labors of his life were spent. The poor country boy, with this vast aim and passion drawing him onward, developed in himself a power and created for himself a sphere of activity and influence, which were felt through the length and breadth of this land in millions of homes, and always on the humane and generous side. Whatever we might think of his judgment in some particular cases, the spontaneous impulse of his mind and the general direction and tendency of what he did, was to unbind heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and to prepare a grander future for all men, but especially for the sons of poverty and toil.

He was a man of simple tastes, and like most such persons, a man of a pure heart and life. He sometimes used very plain language in his denunciation of wrong and wrong-doers. But he was absolutely incapable of lasting resentments. He had very warm personal feelings and very strong personal attachments. No one ever took greater pleasure in doing a kind deed. He loved people of gentle, refined and delicate natures, and especially persons of an affectionate poetic temperament. There was something very touching and beautiful in his relation to Alice and Phoebe Cary. Among those whom the papers speak of as with him in his last hours, a stay and comfort to his motherless children, was a daughter of the late Isaac Hopper, a woman who has endeared herself to those who know her as few women ever can, by works of Christian tenderness and charity, and by the fine womanly qualities of a large, unselfish and loving nature. His pastor, Rev. Dr. Chapin, speaking of him "as one of his truest and earliest friends," said, "He was no fair weather Christian.

He was always in attendance, health permitting, in storm and sunshine. He was a faithful and humble worshiper. He was ready in all kinds of charitable and denominational work. He was not merely a pew-holder or hearer ; he was a sympathetic co-worker."

"We always listen to catch the dying words of great men. I know of none from a dying man so simple, so truthful, so grandly triumphant as those of Mr. Greeley, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' That is a victory for a life. . . . He did not revert to this truth in his weakness, but expressed in his hour of dying the whole conviction of his life. He had lived it constantly. There is a power in Christianity that is not revealed in cold philosophy or flippant worldliness. He who can conscientiously say, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' is strong in faith, strong to do the work of the world, and strong when the work of this world is to be done by him no more."

Mr. Greeley was a man of large intellectual powers which were kept in a state of earnest and varied activity. He never had an opportunity to show what he might have been able to accomplish by the careful, laborious, and profound investigation of some great subject in all its principles and bearings. Probably he would not have been successful in such a work. He was obliged to think upon the run, and few men under the same circumstances have thought or written so much or so well. As a nervous, effective writer, perhaps William Cobbett was the only editor within the present century who would compare with him. But in the temper and aim of his writings, in strength and elevation of moral purpose, as well as in the extent and weight of his influence, Mr. Greeley left the English popular writer a vast distance behind. As an editor striving for a better order of things, throwing himself bravely and generously into the contests of the day, with a moral and intellectual power increasing and extending from year to year, Mr. Greeley has filled a place and exercised an influence such as no other editor in the world has ever reached. It is impossible to measure the amount of good which he has done in the treatment of all humane and

reformatory movements. Neither denunciation nor ridicule could stifle his generous expressions of sympathy with an unpopular cause in which he believed. The weak, the persecuted, the unknown, if there was anything of right or justice on their side, always found a friend in him. If, as in regard to Fourierism, he made a mistake and found afterwards that he had been advocating an impracticable cause, he nevertheless did a great good by vindicating the right, even of such a cause, to have a hearing. Whoever to-day has principles or measures to bring forward for the good of society, whoever, swelling with a generous purpose and a large faith in the possibilities of human advancement, would have the privilege of uttering himself, is sure of a freer field and a more patient hearing, because of what has been done in behalf of every unpopular cause by the philanthropic and intellectual intrepidity of Mr. Greeley.

In this and many other respects, he accomplished a great work. No other editor in this country has ever gained for himself so high a position. He spoke every week to an audience which was to be numbered by millions, and he spoke to them with authority and power. No legislator had such means of acting on the public mind and of moulding the thought and character of a generation. Excepting Washington and Lincoln, what President ever had such an influence for good as this man in a private station was exercising throughout the country?

If only he could have understood the capabilities of the place he filled, for honor and usefulness and power, no hankering after political office could ever have found its way into the generous ambition of his life. The people, the vast constituency who were proud of him as their teacher and prompter in all good thoughts and works, understood this thing, and were grieved and shocked when they found, from his own complaint some years ago, that he was longing to be Governor of New York. The revelation did much to depose him from his high position and to lessen ever afterwards the authority with which he spoke. And when at last he was carried away by the ambition to be President of the United

States, which he had often seen and denounced as a dreadful weakness in others, when he was also drawn in and ready to hazard everything on that one desperate chance, thousands of those who had thought mostly highly of him saw and mourned over the fatal mistake.

For, if there was anything for which Mr. Greeley was eminently unfitted, it was the position to which he was then aspiring. The very qualities which most endeared him to his friends and most excited the enthusiasm of his admirers, his earnest personal feelings, his strongly marked and prominent personal individuality, his ardent, impulsive, sanguine temperament, his boundless good nature and easy disposition, as well as his impatience under all forms and social restraints, were not the qualities to make a great ruler. He had never shown any decided administrative ability or the faculties and attainments which were likely to conduce to it. No man was more brave to advocate, even at the most imminent hazard, great public measures. But in times of extreme national peril, he had shown himself more than once or twice, destitute of the steadiness of nerve and firmness of purpose which make the difference between failure and success. And so, with all his eminent gifts, the people, and among them nineteen twentieths of those whom he had educated in the knowledge of their political duties, wisely decided that he should return to his true seat of influence and power.

With a true and admirable comprehension of what was meant by the election, he accepted the situation. The few articles that he wrote were in temper and purpose worthy of his best days and fame. But the disappointment, superadded to the heavy domestic affliction which had fallen upon him, was too deep. The strong man had received a mortal blow. The maturer, nobler work, which we had hoped from him, freed now from the taint of earthly ambition, was not to be in this world.

The sadness of this thing lies in the vain and foolish ambition which has revealed his weakness, and taken him away. It is time that the grieved, disappointed, indignant judgment of the land should put an end to the political suicides

which have first embittered and then destroyed the lives of some of our ablest men. The mania for the Presidency is the most terrible disease that can lay hold on a really great man. Why should Henry Clay or Daniel Webster, with his magnificent powers and achievements, having a name and honor to which no office could add one ray of glory, why should such a man go mourning and disappointed to his grave, because he has not been chosen President of the United States? The people understand this thing, and set a lower value on their idols when they see them seized and carried away by the fatal mania. Both Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster, in their last years, lost immensely in the respect and admiration and confidence of the nation on that account. It was looked upon as a mournful weakness and disease.

Who does not feel the moral elevation of Judge Marshall, content to be the Chief Justice of the United States, and finding in the faithful discharge of his duties in that office enough to satisfy all honorable aspirations for political distinction? Who does not feel to-day the moral and intellectual ascendancy of Mr. Bryant all the more, because it is known that no public office could have power to draw him from his commanding elevation of personal and private dignity into the arena of political contention?

Not that we would disparage political offices. Our best men ought to consent to fill them. But they are not to go mad after them. And when a man is in his true sphere, with all the influence which legitimately belongs to him, it is a fatal mistake to allow hankerings after some other and apparently more distinguished place to disturb his peace, impair the comfort and the strength with which he does his appropriate work, and turn him aside to risk everything for the attainment of an office which he cannot reach, which could add nothing to his usefulness or honor, and for which, as in the case before us, he is eminently unfit. We cannot afford from such a cause to lose the respect which would otherwise be due to our great men. And it aggravates the bitterness of the tears which we shed for them, to know that an ambition so unreasonable and so vain has brought down their gray hairs prematurely and with sorrow to the grave.

DR. SEARS' FOURTH GOSPEL AND MR. GREELEY.

AMONG the affecting incidents connected with the last days of Horace Greeley's life was the following, related by his intimate friend, Isaiah T. Williams, who said of him: "I never met a man whose nature was more truly religious. He had the utmost faith in God. He often expressed admiration for the writings of Swedenborg, several volumes of which he owned. While at my house, a few weeks before the late election, he became greatly interested in a volume of Sears', entitled, 'The Heart of Christ.' He expressed great admiration for it, saying that work contained his sentiments. At every leisure moment his eyes were bent on the book. The next Sunday after the death of his wife, Mr. Greeley went to Chappaqua. On the way up I asked him whether he wanted the book. He replied, 'Yes,' and added, 'I want one peaceful Sunday; I have not had one in many years.'"

What a pathos there is in these last words! At what a sacrifice of ease and domestic comfort, of family enjoyment and religious meditation and repose, do our public men accomplish their work! We cannot believe that it is wise or well to make such a sacrifice. Not "one peaceful Sunday in many years." We cannot but think that if our ablest men whose powers are tasked so constantly and so heavily, would only make it a matter of conscience to secure for themselves, a "peaceful Sunday," it would do much to throw a serener atmosphere around them, and to save them from the worry, vexation and nervous irritability which makes such inroads upon even the strongest physical organization.

But this is not the point to which we would here particularly call the attention of our readers. We have been accustomed to think of Mr. Greeley as a philosopher of the utilitarian school — and therefore as not entering with any great zeal or relish into the finer and higher sentiments of our nature. But if there is in our language a book which approaches the highest and grandest spiritual truths of our religion by the most delicate processes of spiritual thought and imagination, and which appeals to what is finest and loftiest in our spiritual

nature, it is this work of Dr. Sears, which seems to have had so great a charm for Mr. Greeley. This little incident gives us a deeper insight into his character, and places him on a higher plane of thought and life than anything that we have ever heard or known of him before. No one but a man of very quick, tender and delicate moral and religious sensibilities could be thus earnestly drawn towards such a book.

CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY.

IT is with great satisfaction that we see in different branches of the church, tendencies towards more kindly Christian sympathies and a larger charity. The installation of Mr. Hepworth in New York was by members of five or six different denominations. On the Sunday following Mr. Beecher thus alluded to the occasion and we gladly copy his words. After speaking of the members of the council, he said,—

“And who was this man they were met to examine? The Rev. George H. Hepworth. Who was he? Born of Unitarian parents, reared in Unitarian theology, for all his earlier years a minister of that denomination, and the late pastor of the Church of the Messiah. Following his sympathies he left that church and form, and embraced that more consonant with the orthodox churches: and his place was made good in the Church of the Messiah by our friend and late neighbor, the Rev. Dr. Powers, who, following his sympathies, went over to Unitarianism; and it was this Mr. Hepworth, so born and so reared and so bred, that came before the council to be examined in this orthodox Brick Church. Now what did they do with him? Did they take him, as thirty years ago they would have done, as a vile rag of heresy, and put him in a tub and scrub him till he was all clean? That is what the council that I went before would have done with him; they would have put him through a regular catechism; but these men that were magisters and masters in theology, when this man came in from the Unitarian side of Christianity, and asked to be installed as pastor in good standing of this church in New York, almost entirely left out technical theology. I was not present, but I was told that Mr. Hepworth just made a relation of the steps by which he had changed his view and they accepted him with great joy. I infer from this the creation and growth under divine providence of the great doctrine of spiritual affinity rather

than repulsion. I infer from this that repugnance, which has hitherto been generated by differences of external statements of the truth by external organization, is losing its power and the affinities which spring from like views and desires is increasing. Only so can you account for the existence of this council or its action and result. Neither of the men composing this council gave up any of their views, but there was a way by which they could each hold on to his own theology and yet accept this man, whose theology probably differed from any of them. I should consider a council which came together and said that it made no difference what a man believed very mischievous; a man ought to have a creed, but he should hold that a different creed as it appears to others may be right for them, so that a hundred men may get together and each have a different creed, and may be able to say, 'I do my work by my system and you do your work by yours.' There is a spirit of inward piety that rises higher than technical differences of opinion. It is so in common every-day life. Men in business conduct their business according to different methods, and yet they do not quarrel. No two families in this city probably make their bread alike, or make their beds alike, or treat their servants just the same. I have heard two lumbermen argue as to the best ways of cutting timber and getting it to market; each thought he was right, yet they did not quarrel about it. And so this council did not say that all sectarianism was to be swept away and all sects become one. No, not at all; not till we have another God. God does not like unity, and works by the law of diversity; God makes men different; makes the different parts of their mind work differently, so that men take the truth differently; so when you say that there ought to be unity I say no. I think very well of elm-trees, but I would not have all the trees converted into elms; I think well of English oak or of the cedar of Lebanon, but I would not have all the trees in the land oaks or elms or cedars, so I glory in Episcopacy, I glory in the Presbyterians, I glory in the Methodists, and I glory in any denomination that I see has power to go out into the world and subject it to Christianity. You would not have all men build their yachts alike. Your yacht is one model, my yacht is another. Of course my yacht is the best. Yet people insist that in theology we should all build exactly alike—as much alike as the Newfoundland fishing vessels are, and be as much in fog too. All that that council has proved is that there can be a perfect union under the bond of peace. It is not, then, to be called a victory of the new over the old. It merely

shows that the divine providence that has always guided the church is now guiding it, and that God is inspiring his church with wisdom to meet the newer exigencies of the work that it is now called to perform. And God is letting down streams of light in every direction, and science is shedding its beams abroad to guide men: and let no man be alarmed at the researches of science; let no man think we shall lose anything we can afford to keep; we may come to find that we don't know as much as we thought we did. So the gold says. The great nugget says, 'I am all gold.' 'I will see what you are,' says the chemist, and it goes into the crucible, and out comes gold and out comes slag, and the gold is not half as big as it was. We are full of knowledge, full of conceit, but the word of God stands sure. We take this dear old book (laying his hand upon the Bible) just as it presents itself to us; it teaches the doctrine of the relations of this life and the other life, God's spirit and man's necessity and need."

SUNDRIES.

There seems to be a season of refreshing peace and quiet in the churches. The ministers, after their summer's recess, have come back, with hope and eagerness, to their winter's work. The influence of these long vacations on our city parishes is very great, and we cannot determine yet what the results will be. The absence of the people from their own church, three, four, or five months in the year, must necessarily lessen somewhat the strength of their attachment to the old place of worship, and where they go among different denominations it must loosen somewhat the force of denominational attachments and favor a greater catholicity of sentiment. Whether it will also lessen their personal interest in religion and faith, and take from their zeal and readiness for Christian work under the old and familiar organizations, remains to be seen. While there are dangers in the way, and the new order of things is less favorable than the old to the strong personal and professional attachment between minister and people, and to fixed forms of faith and methods of activity, and there is less concentrated study of religious themes, there are greater freedom, easier methods of transition back and forward between the different denominations, and a more general Christian liberality and kindness among neighbors and

friends belonging to different branches of the church. And if in each religious society the season is short, it is probably used, by the ministers at least, with greater earnestness, greater freshness of thought, and a deeper conviction of the importance of using every opportunity and every moment to the best advantage.

A visit, extending as far south as Washington, gives, in a very superficial way, a hopeful view of things. In Philadelphia, it was pleasant to hear the terms of honor, interest, and respect in which Dr. Furness is spoken of by his people after a ministry of nearly half a century. At Baltimore, Dr. Dewey, notwithstanding the pressure of almost fourscore years, had been preaching with the zeal, the freshness and vigor of a young man, to the great edification of those who heard him. Our friends there are looking forward with interest and hope to the ministry of Mr. Charles R. Weld, recently from the Cambridge Divinity School, who is to be ordained in Baltimore on the second day of January. He has produced a most favorable impression; and as far as we can learn there is on all sides among liberal Christians in the city a friendly feeling towards him as a man of decided ability, and a disposition to unite in helping him on in his work as a true and earnest minister of the gospel.

A visit of a few hours at Washington gave no opportunity to look into the religious condition and prospects. But the improved order of things there is patent to every one who goes there now and who was there under the old regime. In the roominess of its streets, the magnificence of its public buildings, the air of freedom and order which prevails everywhere, Washington reveals itself as it never did before, even to the transient visitor, as worthy to be the seat of a mighty empire. Every government is, to some extent, a source of corruption. It is a necessary evil. The waste of public morals must be made up by the purity of our private homes. We believe that there is no government in the world which does less to demoralize the people than our own. But it becomes the nation to look with the keenest scrutiny into the

evil practices which cunning and unscrupulous men are always trying to introduce into the administration of every department of the government, and to demand that they shall be stopped. The civil service reform is of vital importance. Many of our representatives oppose it because it lessens their facilities for personal advancement. The President is earnest to carry it out, and he and the members of Congress should be made to feel that in this matter he has the strong arm of public opinion entirely on his side. The cause of good morals as well as good government is involved in this movement.

THE OLD SOUTH MEETING-HOUSE.

The proposed alienation of the Old South Meeting-house has been the occasion of a widely extended discussion, and many remonstrances have been sent in to the Legislature, deprecating the probable destruction of this venerable edifice, after it shall have been occupied by the Post Office, according to the plan of a majority of the Pewholders. While we should be sorry to see this old landmark removed, we have no desire to interfere with the wish of the corporation or the society, to remove their sacred treasures to a more convenient or attractive locality; they are the judges of the necessity or expediency of such a removal. But we have seen one reason offered for this change that surprises us, coming from the quarter it does, and that seems to indicate a lack of reverence and devotion we did not expect to have publicly avowed by any member of so conservative a body as the so-called evangelical church professes to be. It is boldly proclaimed that the land occupied by this ancient edifice is "*too valuable for a place of worship.*" It is throwing away money, to allow the sum, for which this might be sold, to be locked up in idleness when it might be invested in commercial enterprise, and its value be visibly enhanced by the yearly increase of usury! The uses of religion, the practical value of public worship and education, are set at naught by the wisdom of this world, which is willing to weigh the fruits of mammon in the scales with the immortal interests of the soul, and the latter is made to kick the beam! It is not that the parish has outgrown its

accommodations and requires more ample room, but the property is worth more in the market than even a more elegant building erected elsewhere would cost: the sale of it will be profitable in dollars and cents, to a corporation already overburdened with wealth! As we have already intimated, the public have no right to say to a worshipping congregation where they shall gather for holy communion, nor compel them by law, or even popular sentiment, to remain where it is distasteful and unpleasant; and though the community may regret the destruction of this building, and express its sorrow that such monuments of the past should one by one be levelled before the importunate demands of trade and local economy, this is something that cannot be helped. But when it is openly said that one place or another is too costly to be used for religious purposes, it puts another face upon the matter; there is then a startling revelation of the superficial hold which religion itself has upon the heart of those who make the avowal!

We hear and see a great deal of the materialism of the present generation, and we know that the worship of mammon and the idolatry of extravagance and fashionable folly have a large multitude of followers: but here is an exhibition of the irreligious spirit at the very foot of the altar; not a confession of the inability of the worshipper to find a suitable offering, from the limited extent of his possessions, but of the poverty of some that do not appreciate the value of the services of piety, nor feel that delight in worship that would lavish upon the object of its love the most precious gifts it can find to bestow. The spirit of piety in all ages has been noted for its zeal in preserving and embellishing the altars of religion and the temples for worship. Even in heathen communities the sacrifices to the gods were of a more costly kind, and the ceremonies of a more imposing nature, indicating the absorbing influence of the sacred sentiments on the human heart. But in Christian times and lands the same ardent spirit of devotion has ever sought to beautify and adorn the temples for worship with the best that wealth could furnish, not counting the cost, nor subordinating the claims of piety, but exalting

them to the first place, thus confessing the ruling power of religion in the soul. It is true, that in the days of our Puritan ancestry, the "meeting-house" was a very humble affair, but it was not a monument of penuriousness, nor of that worldly policy that regrets the expense of religion. Their church buildings were the work of loving hearts and untiring hands; there was no place too good for them to occupy, and there was no embellishment too costly, though in the simple taste of the builders, and with their ideas of sacred propriety, they were plain and homely to our eyes. But in these features they partook of the character of the people, while their private dwellings illustrated the same lowly virtues. Had it been different, had the Puritans come with pride and ostentation to this retreat, they would have belied their professions: had they been niggardly in the choice of a site for the house of worship, and in the preparation of it for its sacred purpose, the present generation would not only have had fewer virtues to recount as an inheritance, but would hardly have reached its present condition of progress and elevation.

We have spoken of materialism and mammon worship; these unquestionable have a great and alarming influence at the present day; but where they become so absorbing, and so control all human enterprise that religion and religious worship are publicly thrust aside and compelled to take a subordinate place in the economies of social life, we may be sure we have as a people reached the summit of all the progress that will ever be permitted to us in this world, and that we are henceforth destined to fall from our high eminence to be numbered with the lost nations of the earth. We have no words to express our fears of the evil tendency of that spirit that counts the cost of the holy sentiment of piety; a spirit that would think to sustain the form of religion on the smallest possible basis of temporal encouragement. It is, we fear, gaining ground in many places, and threatening to drive out faith and worship and culture from many souls: it is essentially destructive: it is infidelity with too thin a disguise to be concealed: it is irreligion, too plain to be mistaken: it is atheism, though it dares not avow its true nature.

J. A. B.

RANDOM READINGS.

BY E. H. SEARS.

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-THREE made its appearance punctually this morning, hale, hearty, and full of promise. People are *wishing* each other a happy new year. Better a great deal do something to make it so, or at least let the wish be the father to the deed. If you owe any one pay it; specially if you owe a poor man or a poor woman anything do not let the debt drag on into the new year. "Short settlements make long friends," is a good maxim of business life. Pay up for your paper if you take one, and if not subscribe and let the year begin now. Subscribe in behalf of that poor neighbor. Send a good newspaper into his family which they will read all the year; which will not cost half as much as some flashy "illustrated" book, and will do them ten times as much good, by putting them in weekly or daily communication with the great, intelligent, stirring world. Pay up the minister, so that he need not live on air and water and faith alone very far into the new year. Being square with the outside world, it is a great deal easier to settle all accounts in the court of conscience and place ourselves in right relations with the heavenly Father.

Look for good things and prosperous days, and other things being the same the good things and the prosperous days will be a great deal more likely to come. For faith and hope and gladdening expectation draw around us the benign agencies of Providence, and draw towards us his blessed angels to work with us; whereas doubt and discouragement bring us within the shadows, and lay open our natures on the side whence they may be invaded by the demons of despair and disappointment and wilted down under them.

"Hope rules a land forever green,
All powers that serve the bright-eyed queen
Are confident and gay;
Clouds at her bidding disappear.
Points she to aught? the bliss draws near,
And Fancy smooths the way."

THE DEATH OF HORACE GREELEY is regarded as a public calamity by all parties and all classes of men. It brings vividly to mind his services in the cause of humanity. Though not an

abolitionist, he was a staunch antislavery man : that is, he believed that slavery under the Constitution should be repressed, and he dealt powerful blows against the institution when Northern politicians were yielding passively to its encroachments. He was humane and tender hearted, and his sympathies were always with the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed. Even his faults leaned to the side of virtue, and we have not a doubt that when he became a candidate for the Presidency he honestly believed that, if chosen, he could be the means of correcting abuses and inaugurating an era of good feeling in which all trace of the old animosities should be obliterated. He was ambitious for office, but it was not a merely selfish ambition. His fond imagination, with his overflowing benevolence, pictured to him a political millennium whose dawn he believed his administration was to be. Such was his unbounded faith in his fellow-countrymen and in the healing power of concession and kindness. That he would have been disappointed most persons believe, but none the less should we admire the goodness of his heart and his amiable faith in man.

It is painful to think that his death was hastened by the heated political canvass in which he took too active a part, and whose excitement was too much for a sensitive nature like his. Into this canvass a new element was introduced, or at least more freely and extensively used, specially adapted to degrade a political contest,— we mean caricature. When used to make vice and knavery not only odious but despicable, as when it photographed the more hideous features of the New York thieves, and held them up to scornful laughter, it has its legitimate place and function. But when employed against honorable men in a political controversy, where there is honest difference of opinion, it cannot be too strongly condemned as a flagrant violation of the decencies, the charities, and the urbanities of life. Mr. Greeley's life and character, as well as his domestic afflictions, ought to have protected him from these gross violations of the laws of honorable party warfare. It ought to be said, however, that this kind of warfare was first incited by Mr. Greeley's own partizans by virulent attacks upon the President, and by wholesale slanders from a participation in which Mr. Greeley in the excitements of the campaign was not entirely free.

With all his political mistakes, he has been a power in the republic, mainly for good, and as such we doubt not would have continued to be if his countrymen had not been called too soon to lament his departure, and his friends to sorrow over his grave.

Mr. Greeley's last mistake caused him bitter disappointment. He mistook the love which the people had for him for popularity. These are two very different things. The people loved him because he was of the people, and had been the unflinching friend of all that the people hold dear. This, with his goodness of heart and almost womanly affectional nature, made the people love him. This, if Mr. Greeley could have seen it, was worth more than what we call popularity, and yet popularity was what he craved; and when the overwhelming defeat came it was too much to bear. And he died without really knowing the estimation in which he was held. The sympathy, the real sorrow poured out so lavishly around his bier by all classes of persons, show how quickly the mistakes of the politician could be forgiven in their love of the man.

THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL is very *learnedly* discussed in the October number of "The British Quarterly." The writer concludes that John the Evangelist is the author, for though that theory is encumbered with difficulties, the theory of the Tubingen school is encumbered with more. But with such defense as this article gives no wonder the skeptics refuse to be converted. The writer assumes that John wrote without ever having seen the Synoptics. He not only believes but *knows* that the Apocalypse (conceded to have been written by John) was written thirty years before the Gospel, and when John was yet an unlearned Galileean and knew the Greek language imperfectly. That, the writer thinks, accounts for the bad Greek in the Apocalypse, and he thinks the purer Greek of the Gospel results from thirty years more of use and study of the language. The writer ignores the almost unanimous early testimony to the later date of the Apocalypse, the insuperable difficulties in the way of dating it early: and he ignores entirely the abnormal condition out of which the Apocalypse was produced. The close interior relationship between the Gospel and the Apocalypse he sees very imperfectly, if at all. With all his learning and parade of authorities, it strike us that his unwarranted concessions and omissions are calculated to make two skeptics to one believer.

"THE ANGEL OF PATIENCE."

We do not know who is the author of the following very sweet effusion. It comes to us copied from the common-place book of one who had verified it abundantly in a long experience of suffering and waiting till glorified by the touch of death.

"Beside the toilsome way
Lonely and dark, by fruits and flowers unblest,
Which my worn feet tread sadly day by day,
Longing in vain for rest,

"An angel softly walks,
With pale sweet face, and eyes cast meekly down,
The while from withered leaves and flowerless stalks
She weaves my fitting crown.

"A sweet and patient grace,
A look of firm endurance true and tried,
Of suffering meekly borne, rests on her face
So pure, — so glorified.

"And when my fainting heart
Desponds and murmurs at its adverse fate,
Then quietly the angel's bright lips part,
Murmuring softly, 'Wait!'

"'Patience,' — she sweetly saith, —
'The Father's mercies never come too late :
Gird thee with patient strength, and trusting faith,
And firm endurance, — wait.'

"Angel! behold, I wait,
Wearing the thorny crown through all life's hours, —
Wait, till thy hand shall ope the eternal gate,
And change the thorns to flowers!

OUR CRITIC who signs himself with three stars we do not see that we shall be able to satisfy. He charged us with making the book of Genesis "the measure of scientific discovery," and so raising a presumption against our judgment and our opinion upon other subjects. We gently reminded him that we never referred to the book of Genesis at all for scientific knowledge, and frankly told him how we do regard it, — as teaching religious truth with groupings of physical facts for its basis. He now shifts his charge and says a "fixed opinion" has been formed, a "conclusion in advance of evidence." We are happy to inform him that we have no opinion about Genesis so "fixed" that we are not ready to modify it from any new evidence we can find; and how he knows that our view of it is in "advance of evidence" we are unable to see unless he is in possession of all the evidence pertaining to the subject. As to the time the race has occupied this earth he says he com-

plains that a short period was assumed. We remind him again that we assumed no period as known and determined, but only as *probable*, taking a shorter one because the longer ones are yet in dispute. In the closing paragraph of his last article we are happy to say that he states correctly our view of the Johannean theology. He makes other points which run into the regions of metaphysics and ontology where we decline to follow him. As to the Divine Noumenon or substance that lies within and beyond the Divine Love, Wisdom, and Power, we all know just as much as the babe three days old, and that is — nothing.

RELIGION AND "SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY." The following paragraph occurs in a forthcoming volume of Mr. Sears, which was already in press when we were charged with making the book of Genesis "the measure of scientific discovery:" —

"No matter how far the Darwins and the Büchners push back the date of man upon the earth. He became man when the transfusions of a human soul which discredited him from all lower natures made his regeneration possible, made those differences which you say your analysis does not detect in the protoplasm, but which in development become very 'marked' and 'definite.' And if men have lived a hundred thousand years on this planet, as we hope will prove to be the case, so much more ample have been the rudimentary provisions of the Divine Hand to people the deathless dwellings with progressive beings. The difference between the barbarism of your diluvial and tertiary periods, and the renewing civilizations of our own, may not be of such mighty account as to warrant the conclusion that the Omnipotent Love must needs create all its angels from the latter."

LAUGHTER is one of the accomplishments not easy to acquire — indeed is never acquired unless one has an inborn capacity for it. None can say how largely it conduces to human health and happiness. A humorist of the highest order who can touch the vein of humor in other minds is a benefactor to his kind: for if he is without any tinge of sarcasm, he does something to improve the temper of his fellow beings and keep it sweet. Sidney Smith in one of his keen sallies of wit sorely puzzled a matter-of-fact man, who pondered over it for some time not knowing what to make of it. Finally it began to dawn upon him and he exclaimed, "Why, Mr. Smith, you probably meant that for a joke." "I certainly did," rejoined Mr. Smith. Then the matter-of-fact man broke up onto waves of laughter which wouldn't subside; his laughing faculties having lain

dormant probably all his life previous, were now let loose for the first time. Dr. Nott used to tell his students that the deepest and most serious impressions were made after men had first been made to laugh, a principle practiced himself with marvellous success. Charles Sumner it is said never could see the wit of the Bigelow Papers, till some one tried to explain it to him, when getting a glimpse of it he said, "But why don't the fellow spell better?" Henry Ward Beecher says he wakes up nights sometimes, and thinking of a good thing brings down untimely censure on his head for untimely outbursts of laughter. In a capital article on the subject, having recommended a cultivation of the laughing faculties, he subjoins a story to help his readers in this line of culture. He says he shakes in the very act of writing it, though he fears that some of his readers will not see it so as to go off upon it. Nevertheless he says he furnishes the spark albeit their powder may not be good. Here is the story, and as we have shaken over it we copy it that our readers may receive it according to their laughing capabilities: "A good deacon had the bad habit of making very long family prayers. His wife was hard of hearing. One morning for some reason he prayed short and then went to the barn to milk. On returning he found his wife still kneeling with closed eyes. He stepped up behind her and shouted "Amen," whereat she quietly awoke and went about her work."

PLAY LOW is the advice of Dr. Thomas Hill for putting out fires. When a fire is blazing out of the roof of a building from away below, firemen he says are tempted to play upon the roof often without success. Play low into the source of the flame that is mounting upward and the blaze will drop immediately, for there is nothing to feed it.

WORDSWORTH, it seems, was a prophet as well as poet. That is to say, he wrote or rather conceived with his natural powers in abeyance in a state of semi-consciousness as to the outward world when the inner realm of truth and beauty opened more vividly its realities and passed into spontaneous utterance. His wife, good woman, not understanding these moods, used to wake him out of them, fearing he might be going off out of the body forever. Says William Howitt, "Once when we were at Rydal Mount Mrs. Wordsworth called out to her husband, 'William!' I said, 'What's amiss?' the poet being seated very quietly in another part of the house. 'Oh,'

said she, 'I am obliged to keep a sharp watch on William, for when he gets deeply thinking he ceases to breathe.' We conjecture that the Ode on Immortality was conceived in one of these moods when he ceased to breathe, and that the Evening Ode, reproduced from the impressions on the senses from outward nature yet sublimed into the representation of truths transcending nature and reaching into worlds "not travelled by the sun," was conceived also in the same state bordering on prophecy. Mrs. Browning is said to have composed sometimes from similar states of mind. The thoughts came themselves set to heavenly music.

"THE NEW CHURCH INDEPENDENT" contains abundance of good things and must set its readers to earnest thinking even when they do not receive all they read as established truth. It is all the more interesting because it does not take its readers through the common turnpike of commonplace thought. It has had some very suggestive articles and discussions on the eternity of evil. We are sorry to see by the last number that some of its readers tire of the subject. They should know that it is the subject over which many of the best minds are brooding in all denominations. The world will hardly take Swedenborg as the last utterance on this subject — especially as he is not quite consistent with himself and leaves gaps in our knowledge which are yet to be filled up. The world may not be fit as yet to receive the whole truth on this subject, for many might abuse it and profane it. So the Lord may hold it in reserve. The early Hebrews seem to have hardly known aught of a future life. Jesus came and partly lifted the veil, assuring us of the fact. Swedenborg affirms more of its nature and methods. But concerning the ENDLESS BEYOND we see no reason to believe that God has yet spoken the last word to the children of men or even to the angels in heaven.

RALLY AROUND THE PRESIDENT! should be the cry louder and louder from the people and the press as the President is urging forward his civil service reform. It is feared by many that selfish politicians who mean to keep the patronage in their own hands to reward their partizans will defeat the plan of the President. They cannot do it if a public sentiment is roused too warm and too determined to be disregarded. That civil offices are "spoils" belonging to a victorious party as a reward to men who have schemed the most and shouted loudest the party watch-word is a most per-

nicious principle and has brought frightful corruption into American politics. President Grant has undertaken to do away with this source of corruption, and will if the people watch the politicians who try to thwart him and give them leave to retire.

THE PROPHET ELIJAH is justly quoted as the master of a grim sort of humor, not to say biting sarcasm, employed against the enemies of truth when they were below the range of reason and argument. His treatment of the prophets of Baal could hardly be cited as an instance of delicate courtesy in religious controversy; and a late writer says that the children of Israel who stood by and heard Elijah's words of banter and ridicule must have burst into roars of laughter. The Bible record of this famous scene probably only reports fragmentary sentences of Elijah's speech. Peter Bayne in his admirable drama, "The Days of Jezebel," which we have already quoted from, expands the record somewhat in one of the striking passages of his poem.

"The hymn's last echoes died away; the sun
Burned with fierce heat swift-striding up the blue.
Standing on that scorched hill we felt his rays
Prick like sharp spear-points. Then I heard again
Elijah's voice. I had been watching close
Baal's prophets, but I now looked straight at him.
A fearful gleam was in his eye, a mirth
Too stern methought for man of woman born;
His glance was vexing those robed prophets more
Than the sun's fire; and then he gave it words.
'Might he not spare one little spark, but one,
Your fine god riding there,' he cried, 'to light
Your sacrifice; he surely has enough;
He's burning you if not your offering.
Poor souls, I pity you.' They screamed for rage.
'A little louder,' smiled he, 'for perhaps
In his warm chariot he has fallen asleep.'
They leaped, they danced, they cut themselves with knives,
Till the blood soaked their robes and poured in streams
From their lanced foreheads. Then he laughed aloud
Great shouts of laughter, till the echoes rang
From crag to crag on Carmel. 'Keep it up,
Another dance,' he shrieked, 'another song!
Leap rather higher; never grudge some drops
Of your dear blood so precious in his sight.
Ye know he is a god, my reverend friends;

How often have ye told the people so?
 Your pretty speeches and the miracles
 Which ye have shown them, these were not of course
 Mere lies accursed. He is a god, you know;
 Louder, I say, he's old, perhaps, and deaf;
 Out with your beards, — that's hopeful, — crack your throats
 In yelling chorus. Good, good, — ha, ha, ha!
 He rubbed his hands, waved wildly in the air
 His sheep-skin mantle, laughed until the tears
 Streamed down his face, and all his body shook
 With paroxysms of mirth and scorn. Ah me!
 That laughter sounded fearfully.

THE ELEVATION OF THE COLORED RACE as affecting materially the interests of the Southern States is a subject of much talk and speculation and ought to enlist a great deal more of determined effort. We denounce the Ku Klux and the carpet-baggers and many denounce the government because of the chaotic condition of the Southern people. *Four million slaves* ignorant and uneducated have been turned into freemen and the ballot has been placed in their hands. Are we to look for miracles and expect anything else than chaos and disorder till this whole region has been dotted with schools as centres for the radiation of light? And how are these schools to be had had without teachers? And how are teachers to be had without Normal Schools to educate the teachers? The teachers must come principally from the colored race who will go among their own people and work with them and for them.

There is a Normal School at Hampton, Va., under the efficient management of Gen. S. C. Armstrong, established for the education of colored teachers. During the autumn just past, one hundred and thirty-one new students were admitted, making the present enrollment two hundred and thirteen. Yet the work there is embarrassed and crippled for want of funds and the institution goes begging for support. *Over thirty promising young men and women were refused admission for want of room.* And many of those who were admitted have to be lodged in shelter tents, but are willing to undergo any privation to obtain the benefits of the school and become educators of their race.

Gen. Armstrong says in his appeal for support, "Shall these students be remanded back to ignorance and degradation, or have an opportunity to lift themselves up to manhood and womanhood?" Yes, shall an institution towards which the colored men and women

are drawn thirsting for knowledge and longing to become heralds of light to their own people languish and decay ; or will the friends of the negro and the friends of the south embrace the golden opportunity to help fill up the "chasm," which the war opened, by pouring funds into the treasury of the Principal of the Hampton School, supporting its scholarships and enlarging its facilities and endowing it as one of the most essential instrumentalities for carrying blessings to the "wards" of the nation? Government can only help them from without and protect them by military force. The Hampton School and those of its class help them *from within* by touching their moral and spiritual energies before the rising of which Ku Kluxism will be impossible and carpet-baggers will disappear.

HELP THE HAMPTON SCHOOL ; spend some breath in talking up its interest and the great national interest which it represents, and a great deal less will be needed in finding fault with the interference of the Government. We have emancipated the bodies of the slaves. We are morally bound to emancipate their minds also, as a duty to them and to the nation with whose future *their* destiny is still fearfully involved. *Help the Hampton School* is the duty to the colored race that lies nearest, and that done the next duty will be clear.

A TOUCHING INCIDENT is related by Mr. S. C. Drew in an article on hymns in the December number of "The New Church Magazine." It was a few days after the battle of Gettysburg. The division to which Mr. Drew was attached had halted just at night-fall from a long march, leaving the bloody field behind them where many of their comrades lay stiff and cold. "The camps had been pitched," says Mr. Drew, "the men had just eaten their scanty rations, and from all sides rose the tumult of voices and laughter and the many sounds of a bivouac. Suddenly from a small wooded hill near by came the sound of singing ; and the hymn 'Jesus, Lover of My Soul' fell upon our ears. In a moment the whole camp was still, and every man listened till the hymn was ended. Then many went soberly to the place where a few devout soldiers had met together for pious communion." Even so, very often under the noises and the seeming gayeties of life, the deepest and the tenderest feelings are concealed, and the profoundest wants of the heart suppressed, till some one touches them and gives them voice and

form, and breaks up the frail surfaces under which men hide their feelings from each other and sometimes from themselves.

"I CHARGE YOU," said a venerable minister at an ordination, — "I charge you to preach as a dying man to dying men." That kind of preaching generally ends in exchanging the present tense for the past. He who preaches as a dying man to dying men very soon comes to preach as a dead man to dead men. A certain preacher, it is reported, turned his back once upon his congregation, and preached out of the pulpit window into the church-yard. He said that there seemed to him to be as much life on one side as on the other, and that it made no difference which of the two congregations he addressed, — the one above ground or the one beneath. And doubtless, too, it would have been difficult to tell to which of the two classes the preacher himself belonged. He who preaches as a living man to living men seldom fails to touch some chord in his audience which vibrates with thrills of eternal life and tidings of immortality.

THE NEED OF GOD.

BY J. H. M.

A BEAUTIFUL life has sometimes opened before us under circumstances which seem to include every element of earthly happiness. Outward grace and loveliness are but an emblem of the grace and love within. Outward prosperity seems only the fitting handmaid to minister of its wealth to a soul enriched with diviner gifts. The dearest affections within are watched over by answering affections from without, and tended day and night by all the offices of kindness that human love can bestow. And yet this soul, so sweetly harmonized in its earthly endowments and surroundings, so poised and balanced in itself, so favored beyond the usual lot in all that is thought to add to the felicities of our mortal condition, — this soul, in moments of unreserved confidence, from its own deepest convictions and experience, speaks of the poverty and unhappiness of life, and seeks its satisfaction and its peace in the hopes which point upward and the faith which lays hold on the powers and the enjoyments of the world to come.

Only as our hearts are turned upward, and our souls born into the light of higher worlds, can the beauty and riches of this world be unfolded to us and enjoyed.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

OFF THE SKELLIGS. A Novel. By Jean Ingelow. Boston: Roberts Brothers.

The author's name is not needed to secure an extensive sale of this book. But they who are led to read it by their great respect for the author will not be disappointed.

SHAWL STRAPS. By Louisa M. Alcott. Being vol. 2 of Aunt Jo's Scrap-Bag. Boston: Roberts Brothers.

Miss Alcott has secured for herself a place among the eminent writers of our day. This book will be welcomed and gladly read by the large class of readers who have been so much interested in her previous books.

WHAT KATY DID. A Story by Susan Coolidge. With Illustrations. Boston: Roberts Brothers.

Full of spirit and of life, a very attractive and charming book for the young.

ABBOTT'S EARLY PIONEERS AND PATRIOTS. A series illustrating the Early History and Settlement of America. By John S. C. Abbott. New York: Dodd & Mead.

THE LIFE OF DANIEL BOONE, the first volume of the above series, is now published, and contains not merely an account of the exciting adventures of border life and Indian warfare, but gives also the picture of a very remarkable man. Daniel Boone was not, as is usually supposed, half a savage, but a man of a peaceful disposition who never used coarse or profane language, and who in his dealings with others was modest, humane and just.

GARETH AND LYNETTE. A New Idyl of the King. By Alfred Tennyson. Boston: James R. Osgood & Co.

This poem has something of Tennyson's old charm, and, if it adds nothing to his fame, it will take nothing from it. We have read it twice with increasing interest, and if it has failed to create

in us the glow and enthusiasm awakened by many of his earlier poems, perhaps it is because we are less impressible than we once were. In vigor of conception, firmness of execution, richness of coloring and depth of feeling, it is below the standard of the great poet. But who else among the English poets of our day could have written a poem so delicate and harmonious in all its parts, so fine in sentiment, and with such a musical rhythm rising and changing with the subject? It may well take its place as a part of the great poem to which it belongs.

THE LILLINGSTONES OF LILLINGSTONE. By E. J. Warboise. New York: Dodd & Mead.

A book most exemplary in morals, and abounding in lessons and illustrations of Christian living. The story is well told, but there are no strong marks of genius, and the whole production might perhaps be set down as rather ordinary.

BARRIERS BURNED AWAY. A story by Rev. E. P. Poe. New York: Dodd & Mead.

This story, which is told with a good deal of power, was published as a serial in the New York Evangelist. Its scenes and incidents are connected with the great fire in Chicago.

Among the books announced by Roberts Brothers is a volume entitled **THE PERFECT LIFE**—a volume of sermons on the subject by William Ellery Channing, selected by Willim H. Channing. We have not yet seen the volume, but are happy to mention it for the benefit of our readers.

OLD LANDMARKS AND HISTORICAL PERSONAGES OF BOSTON. By S. A. Drake. With numerous illustrations. Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co.

This is a book which everybody who has any connection with Boston should be glad to own. The subjects are many and interesting, and the name of the author is a sufficient guarantee for the accuracy of his statements.

MY HEALTH. By F. C. Burnand, Author of "Happy Thoughts," &c. Boston: Roberts Brothers.

A very humorous, amusing, entertaining book. It appears as the



NEW PUBLICATIONS.

diary of a man who imagines that he is sick, and who, having nothing else to do, undertakes to make everything bend to his one idea of health. There is in it a good deal of wit, united with much shrewdness of observation and many useful suggestions.

LECTURES ON THE REUNION OF THE CHURCHES. By J. J. I. Von Dollingen. Translated by H. N. Oxenham. New York: Dodd & Mead.

This is the latest and, in its subject at least, the most interesting of the author's works. We hope to prepare a more extended notice of it hereafter.

NONSENSE SONGS, Stories, Botany, and Alphabets. By Edward Lear. Boston: James R. Osgood & Co.

This little volume seems to us the perfection of "lively nonsense, the true thing, the genuine spirit," to use Miss Edgeworth's words in praise of the happy little genius. She says, "You may know him by his well-bred air and tone which none can counterfeit." Here is one of the most comical contributions to the good cause of harmless amusements.

THE CHILDREN'S TREASURE. Boston: Lee & Shepard.

A very pretty, pleasant book for children. The pictures are remarkably fine, and the stories good.

WHITTIER'S COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS have been published in a single volume by James R. Osgood & Co. The volume is of convenient size (three hundred and ninety-five pages), with double pages, clear, distinct type, and an ample index. It is designed as the "Household Edition," and brings the favorite poet of New England within reach of every family, so that small means or weak eyes need not deprive any one of the comfort and the pleasure of the richest lyrical melodies in the English language.

THE MIRACLES OF FAITH. A Sketch of the Life of Beatè Paulus. By Mary Weitbrecht, with an Introduction by Rev. Charles S. Robinson, D.D., of New York. New York: Dodd & Mead.

This little gem of a biography, like Müller's "Life of Trust," is written to show the efficacy of prayer. It also depicts the life of a

pastor's wife of singular sweetness, beauty, and piety as it held the noiseless tenor of its way in one of the highland villages of Germany. The "miracles of faith" are the answers which come to earnest prayer in times of difficulty, sometimes with such distinctness and special emphasis that the theory of "coincidence" fails. The little volume of one hundred and three pages is a tonic to one's faith, constantly suggesting the unseen but intimate relations between the natural and spiritual world.

THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE, for the year 1871, for a copy of which we are indebted to the courtesy of Senator Sumner, is printed by authority of Congress, and is rich in various information of special value to the farming interest.

ELSIE'S GIRLHOOD is described in a third volume which we hope finishes the story of Elsie Dinsmore. In this volume Elsie falls in love with a graceless scamp. Her father forbids the marriage, and she obeys as usual, till the true lover comes along. Elsie is undoubtedly an example of filial love and obedience, but such an example as never appeared in actual life. Dodd & Mead.

THE NEW CHURCH MAGAZINE is a new monthly which started last November, published in this city. It is the organ of the more catholic portion of the Swedenborgians, and deserves a liberal patronage both for its literary ability and beautiful Christian spirit.

We hope to notice next month the following books which came too late for our present number. From Roberts Brothers: THE PERFECT LIFE, by William E. Channing. THE WORLD PRIEST. A poem, translated from the German of Schefer, by Charles T. Brooks. MEMOIRS OF MADAME DESBORDES-VALMORE, by the late C. A. Sainte Beuve, translated by Harriet W. Preston. CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY. Ten Christmas stories, by E. E. Hale. From James R. Osgood & Co.: HIS LEVEL BEST, and other stories, by E. E. Hale. From Dodd & Mead: MILES STANDISH, the Puritan Captain, by J. S. C. Abbot. ONLY GIRLS, by Virginia F. Townsend.